

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes: February 11, 2020
17425 Ballinger Way NE—Council Chambers

Planning Commissioners present: Vice Chair Maddy Larson, Richard Saunders, TJ Fudge, Jon Lebo, Mark Withers, Ira Gross, Rachael Katz; Chair Joel Paisner (via telephone), Steve Morris, Mark Withers

Staff and others present: Tom French, Councilmember; Councilmember Lori Bodi; Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Nick Holland, Senior Planner; Christina Haworth, Otak

Members of the Public: Mike Dee; Jeff Altman, Stephen Plush, Richard Bender, David Lange, Ken Tank, Marcia Tank, Ron Murphy, Tim Hohn, Julian Anderson, Mamie Bolender, Chuck Bolender, Greg Anderson, E&M Goldberg, Steve Lemonds, Gail Gross, Maris Abelson, Gary Bass, Betty Vanderveen, Lisa Steinbrook, Al Kinney, Randy Hall, Saly Yamasaki, Dan Benson, Larry Goldman, Joe Brogan, Rob Graves, Mark Vanderveen, Bob Wells, Robyn Atkinson, Mark Speidel, Anne Udaloy, Terry Smith, Sarah Revoyr, Brian Bill, Byron Barnes, Connie Barnes, Charlene Bender, Marty Ross, Jim Moore, Melissa Robertson, Jim Stoetzer, Ned Lawson, Peter Eglick, Bill Leon, Ben Moore, Marilyn McGuire, Robert Horsley, Jim Robbins, Silos Stroly, Tom Grabowski

Planning Commissioners absent: none

Call to order: 6:07 PM

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Fudge motioned to approve the agenda. Mr. Gross seconded the motion. Mr. Morris suggested that item 4 (public comment) be dropped, and Mr. Withers seconded. The Commissioners voted and the motion failed 6-3. The agenda was then approved unanimously.

Presentation

Director Bennett provided an explanation of the specific code changes proposed for the town center zoning regulations with the aid of a slide presentation. He said that the process involves repealing and replacing the current town center regulations. He spoke of the drafts that have been presented so far, and mentioned that the proposed residential unit maximum of 700 units that was included in the draft was based on information from the EIS as a starting point for discussion. He clarified that the Commission was not making a recommendation on the residential density limits at this time. Commissioners are only discussing the parking structure regulations.

Cristina Haworth from Otak explained the phased approach of adopting code regulations that was underway. She discussed the details of the proposed amendments, such as parking stall sizes, stairwell design, proposed lighting types, landscaping, and signage, among others. She explained the differences between the required code provisions and recommended elements found in the draft design guidelines. She spoke about a proposed creation of a design review board which would review and make recommendations on major Town Center design proposals. Ms. Haworth explained that the revised process for project review would apply to any project proposed in town center. She went on to describe the different setbacks, maximum footprint, bulk, and dimensional changes proposed. Ms. Haworth talked about exceptions and bonuses for projects within town center, and in what situations those could be applied. She also explained the public benefits that the Commission is considering, such as community rooms and meeting spaces, open spaces, and/or bike and pedestrian crossings.

Director Bennett presented photos of a model that Commissioner Gross had created. The photos depicted differences in height between various parking structure concepts and the existing town center buildings. Parking structure concepts of 30 foot, 40 foot, and 60 foot heights were depicted. An explanation was

1 provided about the model and how it illustrated the potential façade protrusions and various other design
2 elements currently being considered in the draft regulations.
3
4 Director Bennett talked about how the proposed process for development review of projects within the town
5 center. He described how the proposed design review board would evaluate the development application for
6 new construction and presented a flow chart that illustrated how an application would move through the
7 development review process and when a development agreement might be part of the application. Director
8 Bennett explained that each property owner within the City's limits would receive notice for a public hearing
9 on a town center development application.
10

11 Director Bennett summarized the draft town center design guidelines for parking structures. He said the draft
12 guidelines are intended to ensure that human scale and use pedestrian friendly elements are incorporated into
13 Town Center parking structures.
14

15 Director Bennett summarized the next steps in the process. He said the first phase is for the Planning
16 Commission to make a recommendation regarding the parking structure regulations and guidelines. Phase II
17 would be for the Commission to review regulations and guidelines for the rest of by the end of this
18 moratorium period.
19

20 **Public Hearing**

21 Vice Chair Larson opened the public hearing to consider proposed regulations and guidelines for a parking
22 garage in Town Center and invited members of the public to comment.
23

24 **Jeff Altman**

25 Mr. Altman said he has been an LFP resident of 44 years, and a former of the transportation committee
26 member. He said the City has been blessed with excellent bus service, but it is hard to get there if you live up
27 in the hills. He said he is in support of a parking garage, but feels that it needs to be architecturally attractive.
28 He said he is also in support of the design review board.
29

30 **Stephen Plush**

31 Mr. Plush presented comments from Don Fiene. He said that there are several gaps that must be addressed
32 prior to the expiration of the current moratorium. He said he does not support the types of decisions the
33 draft amendments indicate would be made by staff.
34

35 **Richard Bender**

36 Mr. Bender said he had questions regarding the moratorium and what impact it would have.
37

38 **Dave Lange**

39 Mr. Lange said that he was currently living in Kenmore. He said the Sound Transit garage needs to handle a
40 commuter load and warned that if rail comes down SR522 as planned, there could be as many as additional
41 200 additional cars stalls identified as a result of what Sound Transit is doing. He said that if you run BRT, it
42 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
43 worried about the errand and event parking up against what is currently being used in the upper and lower
44 lots. He said that any future use of the commercial area should include room for people coming to use those
45 amenities. He said he believes that the standard building for town center should be two commercial stories,
46 and three residential stories. He went onto say that the transit oriented development parking should be under
47 a maximum area of 60,000 square feet, and while that would create smaller store fronts, the area should be
48 able to accommodate for spaces like food courts and commons areas. He said that a commercial focus
49 should be maintained for town center so that the residents living there can utilize those types of amenities.
50

51 **Ken Tank:**

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

1
2 Julian Anderson:

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

11
12 Gail Gross:

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

16
17 Maris Abelson:

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

21
22 Gary Bass:

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

24
25 Sally Yamasaki

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

37
38 Dan Benson

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

42
43 Larry Goldman

44 Mr. Goldman said he is an LFP resident. He said likes the mixed use concept and underground parking
45 much like the U-village that he visits frequently. He said, depending on the water table in town center, he
46 would favor underground construction because it would mean less floors above ground. He said he has
47 serious concern about the garage location and the process to change it. He mentioned that for the past three
48 years, the location has always been in the town center because that's what people voted on in ST3, it's what
49 has been in the City open houses and the Sound Transit open houses, as well as what has been studied. He
50 said if the garage's location is going to suddenly change, there should be a compelling reason. He stated that
51 he would like to see environmental studies, cost analysis, and justification for any proposal to change the
52 garage location, so that he can be informed as to the reasons for the change. He mentioned that the town

1 center garage location makes sense for those living in horizon view, but that if the southern gateway location
2 were to be selected, it may make more sense to drive in to work instead of riding the bus line.

3
4 Joe Brogan
5 Mr. Brogan said he represents the property owner, Merlone Geier and continues to be engaged in all aspects
6 of Town Center planning. He indicated he has presented written comments in addition to those provided
7 here and that he does not see any discussion or modification of the drafted regulations which incorporate his
8 comments. He said the property owner has no role in the parking garage. Merlone Geier is not the
9 proponent, developer, owner, or designer. He stated that Sound Transit as those roles. He mentioned that
10 the proposed regulations pertain to any parking structure, and that the property owner does not propose to
11 build a parking garage. He said he has proposed some changes to the phasing language and the development
12 agreement language in his written comments.

13
14 Rob Graves
15 Mr. Graves stated he is concerned about town center development and asks that the garage be reviewed in
16 conjunction with potential residential units. He said a lot of people are concerned about the town center, and
17 wants the Planning Commission to think about what will happen to our lovely city while recommending
18 actions.

19
20 Mark Vanderveen
21 Mr. Vanderveen said he is involved in commercial and multi-family real estate and that he is a land developer.
22 He has spent 2 years trying to get permit for his development in Seattle. He said a 30-foot height maximum
23 with incentives to 60 feet in height is excessive. He said that any proposed public benefit would need to be
24 defined. He mentioned tree canopy coverage goals for residential lots and suggested town center have the
25 same type of regulation.

26
27 Robyn Adkinson
28 She said she does not want parking garage in LFP. She stated she is concerned about traffic in rush hour and
29 that the water table is very high, historically. She also said she does not want 700 residential units in town
30 center.

31
32 Ann Udaloy
33 Ms. Udaloy thanked the Planning Commission. She stated she is also in favor of having parking structure at
34 Town Center and she said her neighbors are too. She stated she would like a place to park when she rides the
35 bus. She mentioned that she is a consultant in hydro-geology and that a high water table does not determine
36 how high a building can be. She also said that she supports retail, but not 60 foot heights.

37
38 Sara Reyvor
39 Ms. Reyvor said she takes public transit to work every day. She would like to thank the Commission for
40 prioritizing pedestrian access with the regulations. She stated that she does not support structures over 30
41 feet, and questions the town center location for a garage. She mentioned that the 40 foot height came out of
42 nowhere. She said she wonders about the incentives and why they aren't requirements. She also said that she
43 does not want LFP to be transit hub.

44
45 Melissa Robinson:
46 Ms. Robinson thanked Cmr. Gross for the model. She said she thinks that a parking structure in Town
47 Center is a good idea and likes the emphasis on Northwest architecture. She said the most important things
48 are nature, environmental sustainability, pedestrian facilities, and pro-community features. She also said that
49 her children are watching and that development needs to favor sustainability.

50
51 Jim Stoetzer

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

4

5 Ned Lawson:

6 Mr. Lawson thanked the Planning Commission for having the public hearing. He said he is requesting that
7 the Planning Commission advise City Council to extend the moratorium. He also asked that a credible traffic
8 study be conducted with a mitigation plan for garage which he does not support garage at town center. He
9 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
10 favor of abandoning the current design review process.

11

12 Peter Ecklick:

13 Mr. Ecklick stated that he is a land use attorney. He offered kudos to the Planning Commission. He said
14 that City staff should have provided more background information on the issues in the form of a staff memo.
15 He said he supports a moratorium extension and does not support a design review board format that allows
16 members from outside the City. He said the design review process produces final designs without public
17 comment. He said that the EIS was rushed out and that impacts were not properly studied. He insisted that
18 the Planning Commission should ask the Council to communicate to Sound Transit an alternative location to
19 the parking garage. He asked why 700 units in the code and said that the format of the public hearing was
20 flawed since it was only on a portion of the code changes that the Commission was working on. He also said
21 that he does not feel that the public was provided complete information.

22

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

25

26 Bill Leon

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

30

31 Ben Moore

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

36

37 Robert Horsley

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

40

41 Mike Dee

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

45

46 Lisa Steinbrook

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

49

50 Vice Chair Larson thanked the public for their comments, and participation.

51

52 Cmr. Saunders suggested that the Commision should discuss the following three items:

1 1. The reasons behind the moratorium and the role of the Planning Commission during that period;
2 2. Removing the 700 unit maximum density limit from the draft regulations; and
3 3. Making a motion to the Council asking them to seek an alternative locations for a parking garage.

4
5 Cmr. Withers explained the rationale behind the moratorium and pointed out that existing regulations do not
6 have a unit cap.

7
8 Cmr. Fudge said he has an understanding that LFP must accommodate a parking structure from Sound
9 Transit, but that they can dictate the location. Vice Chair Larson noted that the Commission already
10 suggested to the Council to explore alternative locations for the parking garage. Cmr. Paisner stated that he
11 agreed with Cmr. Saunders thoughts.

12
13 Cmr. Lebo talked about extending the moratorium and indicated that the Council has directed the
14 Commission to wrap up the recommendation. He suggested that the Commission considers a motion to
15 extend the moratorium.

16
17 Vice Chair Larson explained her view of the Commission role in the matter of the parking garage. The
18 Commission is a recommending body who advises the Council and its decisions and recommendations will
19 have implications for the future.

20
21 Cmr. Katz moved for a five minute recess, Cmr. Fudge seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The
22 meeting recessed at 7:55pm.

23
24 Meeting was called back to order at 8:05.

25
26 **Public Comment:**

27
28 Jim Stoetzer:

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

31
32 Vice Chair Larson responded that a memo was sent on the subject. She said that an official response was not
33 received. Vice Chair Larson read an excerpt of a document she had about topics the Commission should
34 explore via the Council's guidance. Vice Chair Larson asked about how the public could access the memo
35 sent to the Council. Director Bennett clarified that it was a motion sent to the Council. Jim Stoetzer said he
36 would like some information specifically from the City about the alternative site issue. Councilmember
37 French said that he presented the Commission's motion on an alternative garage location to the City
38 Administrator who communicated it to the Council.

39
40 Jim Stoetzer asked why the Commission didn't receive an answer from the Council on that issue.

41
42 Vice Chair Larson intervened and stated that the discussion involving Mr. Stoetzer and Councilmember
43 French needed to conclude so that the Commission could continue with public comment. She offered to be
44 accessible to Mr. Stoetzer after the meeting if he wish to discuss the issue further.

45
46 Jean Robbins

47 Ms. Robbins thanked Mr. Stoetzer for bringing that issue up and said she hopes there will be consideration of
48 alternative locations for the parking garage. She said she is concerned about the shape and the facades of the
49 garage. She offered suggestions on how to design the parking garage where were based on the vision
50 statement.

51
52 Mike Dee:

1 Mr. Dee thanked the Commission for accommodating the many citizens who wanted to speak during the the
2 public hearing. He said that there was an opportunity to bring up the parking garage location to the other city
3 councils in the region at a joint meeting that was happening soon.

4

5 **Silos Stroly:**

6 Mr. Stroly talked about the lack of sidewalks in town, especially on the hills.

7

8 Vice Chair Larson replied to Mr. Stroly's comments and mentioned the safe streets initiative.

9

10 Vice Chair Larson expressed her desire to end the meeting on time.

11

12 **Old Business**

13 Implementation of Town Center Vision

14 Parking Structure Regulations: Height, Footprint, Non-Negotiables

15

16 Vice Chair Larson said that the goal is to finalize recommendations for parking garage prior to end of
17 moratorium and asked Commissioners for their ideas on how to approach that goal

18

19 Cmr. Saunders said that he needs to analyze the public comments and would appreciate a discussion with the
20 Commission on the content of the comments. Cmr. Katz said that the code changes needs more work. She
21 recommended focus be on the parking structure comments. Vice Chair Larson agreed.

22

23 Cmr. Lebo recused himself from discussions regarding the parking garage.

24

25 Cmr. Fudge said the provisions on bicycles, buffers, and process needs further discussion. Cmr. Morris asked
26 for clarity on what Cmr. Fudge meant by discussion of the process. Cmr. Fudge said that he heard public
27 comment that questioned the integrity of using a design review board. He said he has new information on the
28 process and needs to analyze it. Cmr. Morris said that he identified three primary areas of feedback: those
29 who don't want the garage in Town Center; those who don't want to allow a 60-foot height maximum, and
30 those who want more public involvement in the development review process. Vice Chair Larson agreed that
31 she would like additional time to analyze the process portion of the regulations. Vice Chair Larson also
32 mentioned her concerns over traffic studies provisions. Cmr. Katz agreed. Vice Chair Larson asked if SEPA
33 is required for a garage project. Director Bennett responded that a project-level SEPA review would be
34 required. Cmr. Saunders asked how SEPA would be administered at the project level. Director Bennett
35 explained how SEPA authority can be used to require traffic studies for specific projects and added that the
36 code could also include a traffic study requirement. Cmr. Paisner said he is in favor of having a traffic study
37 as a code requirement. All Commissioners agreed. Director Bennett said he would draft language to create
38 the requirement.

39

40 Vice Chair Larson asked if water table issues would be explored during SEPA. Cmr. Katz responded that
41 water resources would be explored through an impact analysis if SEPA is used. She also said that the
42 geotechnical engineering would need to be performed in order to design the foundation and the water table
43 would be addressed with that analysis.

44

45 Cmr. Fudge said that traffic studies at the project level review is not helpful for planning, only for mitigation
46 measures. Cmr. Saunders agreed. He also said that it is important to identify what would trigger mitigation
47 prior to getting an application for development. Vice Chair Larson asked if the Environmental Impact
48 Statement (EIS) was supposed to address these issues. Cmr. Lebo said that the EIS allows you to be
49 informed about potential projects that you would like to consider. He said that it works within a range of
50 alternatives and talk about how alternatives are evaluated through the EIS process. Vice Chair Larson
51 thanked Cmr. Lebo for his explanation.

52

1 Cmr. Paisner asked Director Bennett if a code requirement for a specific traffic or other special study would
2 alleviate the opportunity for someone to adopt existing, non-project EIS information. Director Bennett said
3 that he would like to ask the City attorney that question and get back to the Commission. Cmr. Saunders
4 asked how a project specific traffic study would result in changes to mitigation measures. Cristina Haworth
5 explained how a typical project specific traffic study works. A discussion about traffic mitigation measures
6 that might result from a study of the type of development expected in the Town Center. Director Bennett
7 explained how a peer review of a traffic study would occur and that level of service for effected intersections
8 would need to be taken into account. .

9
10 Cmr. Katz suggested that Commissioners read through of each proposed code section prior to next meeting.
11 Cmr. Saunders said that the feedback from the property owner should be discussed at the next meeting.
12 Cmr. Lebo suggested recommending an extension to the moratorium. He made a motion to ask the City
13 Council to extend the moratorium for another 6 months to allow the Planning Commission additional time to
14 look at town center issues, as well as for the public to understand town center issues. Cmr. Morris seconded
15 the motion. Cmr. Katz said she would like the City Council liaison to get the Council's opinion prior to
16 voting in favor of the motion. Cmr. Lebo said that it is important that the Commission have an opinion on
17 this issue, and that the Council should get this information as soon as possible. He also explained the role of
18 the Council Liaison, and said that person cannot give an accurate idea of Council's position. Vice Chair
19 Larson asked for a vote on the motion. Cmr. Paisner abstained and all other Commissioners voted in favor
20 of the motion.

21
22 Cmr. Katz asked how to get information from the Council. Vice Chair Larson said that they would discuss
23 that later.

24
25 There was consensus among Commissioners that the 700 unit maximum residential density language be
26 removed from the draft code amendments and Director Bennett confirmed that it would be blank in the next
27 draft.

28
29 **Next Meeting**
30 February 18, 2020 was suggested as the next meeting date, but only five commissioners indicated that they
31 could attend. Six Commissioners indicated that they could attend a February 19, 2020. Cmr. Paisner asked if
32 an answer from the Council regarding the motion on the moratorium would be available prior to the meeting.
33 Director Bennett said that he would bring it up at the Council work session that would be occurring on
34 February 13, 2020. It was decided that February 19, 2020 would be the date for the next Commission
35 meeting.

36
37 **New Business**
38 None.

39
40 **Reports and Announcements**
41 None.

42
43 **Public Comments**

44
45 Robert Horsley:
46 Mr. Horsley thanked the Planning Commission for the motion on extension of the moratorium and said that
47 the 700 unit language should be removed.

48
49 Julian Anderson:
50 Mr. Anderson thanked all involved in the meeting. He said he would like to reflect on the meeting style, and
51 asked the group about how they are making decisions. Vice Chair Larson asked him to clarify what he was

1 talking about. Mr. Anderson said that the meeting style and the way it is conducted leads to confusion and he
2 recommends consensus and decisions on issues be recorded as a formal statement.

3
4 Mike Dee:

5 Mr. Dee thanked the Commission for the motion on the moratorium.

6
7 **Agenda for Next Meeting:**

8 Similar to the February 11 agenda.

9
10 **Adjournment:**

11
12 Cmr. Lebo motion to adjourn the meeting, Cmr. Morris seconded, and all voted in favor. The meeting was
13 adjourned at 9:12 pm

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17

18
19 APPROVED:
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21



22
23
24 Joel Paisner, Vice Chair
25

26