

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes: April 14, 2020
Virtual Meeting

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

Staff and others present: Tom French, Councilmember; Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Lauren Hoerr, Assistant Planner; Kim Adams Pratt, City Attorney; Christina Haworth, Otak

Members of the Public: Unknown

Planning Commissioners absent: None

Call to order: 7:00 PM

Commissioners and others in attendance on Zoom meeting introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes:

January 14th, January 27th, February 11th, February 19th, February 25th

Comr. Gross moved to approve the meeting minutes for the January 14th, January 27th, February 11th, February 19th, and February 25th meetings as presented. Comr. Katz seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Meeting Dates

Next meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2020. Comr. Gross indicated that he might not be available. It was suggested that an email be sent out to decide on meeting dates.

Chair Paisner asked the City Attorney Ms. Pratt to explain what Commissioners will be expected to do in the future. Ms. Pratt responded that each City has discretion to determine what is necessary. Meetings are now allowed virtually as long as they're necessary and routine. Ms. Pratt said that the Commission has had public input on the freestanding garage and can now look at making recommendations to make to City Council. It would be necessary and routine to move forward with making recommendations on items that have already been discussed during regular open public meetings. The duration of the Stay Home, Stay Safe Order will also affect the plan going forward. Ms. Haworth's draft has both proposed code language and proposed design guideline language, so the Commission can hopefully move through things more quickly. Comr. Fudge said Commissioners should be involved in putting the draft work plan together. Mr. Bennett said they are planning to introduce the work plan at the next meeting. Comr. Fudge said it will be important to be able to provide substantive feedback. Ms. Haworth said the work plan is intended to help divide the work at each meeting into correlating sets of code amendment and design guidelines proposals. She said she'd be happy to take comments and revisions so that the work plan works for everyone. Comr. Katz thanked Ms. Haworth for putting the work plan together.

Public Comment

Mr. Bennett read aloud the following public comment that had been emailed in earlier that day:

Katherine Comeau:

From email: "I would like my comments read at this evening's meeting. In these most uncertain and challenging times on many levels, thank you to the LFP City Council for maintaining a flow of progress. The overarching theme here, I think, is for our developments at our Town Center to maintain a strict responsibility to the integrity of the community of Lake Forest Park and to the

1 surrounding land and infrastructure. That has been supported in many ways. I think it is important
2 to remember it though now and again. That responsibility of integrity is also to not fall into being
3 another cash cow for Merlone Geier's herd. 700 apartments, maybe even 350 apartments built on
4 the Town Center, may be the stone that could break out proverbial camel's back. Quality over
5 quantity, please. Thank you."

6
7 Cmr. Fudge asked how many people were participating in the meeting. Mr. Bennett explained how
8 the meeting was being broadcast to the public through the cable TV service and said that he did not
9 know how many were tuned into the broadcast. Councilmember French noted that another
10 Councilmember who had tuned in had indicated to him that it was difficult to hear Mr. Bennett.

11 12 **Report from City Council Liaison**

13 Councilmember French thanked City staff for working hard to keep operations running as smoothly
14 as possible at the City. He noted the last Council meeting was held virtually and they'll likely use a
15 similar format at the next meeting. The Council first expected to be working on things on an
16 emergent basis, but the reality is that they are now trying to move forward with certain actions to
17 prevent emergent issues. Council won't be able to act on the Commission's recommendations until
18 on-site public hearings are possible. He urged Commissioners to make as much progress as they can,
19 and then Council will act on it when they can. He said he was open to responding to questions from
20 Commissioners.

21
22 Cmr. Saunders asked what Councilmember French had heard about Sound Transit. Councilmember
23 French said he would need to refer that question to the City Administrator. Councilmember French
24 noted that in terms of economic impacts, Sound Transit will likely have to make some choices on
25 prioritizing what can move forward. He clarified that he was saying this as an individual and not on
26 behalf of the Council or the City. He mentioned the possibility of extending the moratorium and
27 said he hopes that Councilmembers and City staff will be able to be very communicative and
28 provide updates on a regular basis as more information does become available.

29
30 Ms. Pratt clarified that the moratorium runs out in September, and that Council would certainly be
31 able consider an extension at that time, but there is no way to know whether it will be extended or
32 not until we get closer to the date that the moratorium expires. Cmr. Fudge asked Councilmember
33 French and Ms. Pratt if the moratorium covers everything at Town Center, or can certain
34 developments be sectioned off. Ms. Pratt said that right now, the moratorium applies to all
35 development in the Town Center, but Council could consider releasing some work at Town Center,
36 like opening it to the garage and not allowing anything else, but right now it is all-in-one.
37 Councilmember French said he could bring the idea of bifurcating the moratorium to
38 Councilmembers for consideration.

39
40 Attempts were made to work on problems with the audio system in the Council chambers from
41 7:30-7:47pm. Ms. Pratt noted that as long as people can still understand what is being said, then the
42 meeting should to continue. Discussion ensued during the 17 minute period, however, no
43 substantive decisions or motions were made.
44

1 **Old Business**

2 **Implementation of Town Center Vision**

3 **Ch. 2.41 Design Review Board**

4 Mr. Bennett said the draft sent last week reflected all of the changes from the February 25th
5 meeting. He said the last change made to this section created the requirement for all the members of
6 the Board to reside in the City. Ms. Pratt noted that the red lining shows the last agreed-upon edit
7 from the Commission, so we'd be looking to Commissioners as to whether they'd be able to
8 recommend Ch. 2.41 to the City Council. Cmr. Katz said she seems to remember agreement among
9 Commissioners. Chair Paisner asked if anyone disagreed. Cmr. Saunders, Cmr. Fudge, and Cmr.
10 Larson asked how the Design Review Board fits into the overall process. Discussion occurred
11 among Commissioners. Chair Paisner said it didn't feel appropriate to take a vote at this time on this
12 individual section.

13
14 **Ch. 18.08 Definitions (new or amended)**

15 Mr. Bennett explained which definitions have been added or changed. Ms. Pratt said that these
16 definitions have not been edited since the Commissioners last saw them. Mr. Bennett suggested
17 reviewing these in light of 18.42.110 Administration. Chair Paisner agreed that it would make sense
18 to wait to discuss definitions during the 18.42.110 Administration discussion.

19
20 **Ch. 18.42.100 Town center design guidelines-- Adopted (Design Guidelines for Parking Structures)**

21 Ms. Haworth stated that they started with the 2005 version and kept content that is relevant and that
22 reinforces the adopted vision, but updated it to align with the parking garage. The main item for
23 discussion is the highlighted Freestanding Parking Structure Architectural Guidelines. She said
24 Commissioners should be familiar with the content and the relationship between the "shoulds" and
25 "shalls." Ms. Haworth continued to summarize the draft guidelines.

26
27 For page 1, Cmr. Larson said she wanted to discuss the sentence in the first paragraph "Sound
28 Transit has stated that the structure should accommodate a minimum of 300 vehicles," but she
29 thought it seemed to make an assertion that isn't the role of the Guidelines to make. Cmr. Fudge
30 noted this issue as well and suggested saying "approximately 300 vehicles" and deleting the last
31 sentence of the first paragraph. Commissioners agreed. Cmr. Larson noted the typo in the first
32 sentence of the second paragraph. Chair Paisner asked Commissioners to focus on just substantive
33 comments and noted that any wordsmithing related comments should go to Mr. Bennett and Ms.
34 Haworth.

35
36 On page 2, Cmr. Larson noted that it would be great to define "should" and "shall" for readers early
37 on in the document. She asked if page 2's encouragement about exterior overhangs can coexist with
38 places in the code that requires it. Ms. Haworth confirmed that the two things can coexist. Cmr.
39 Fudge noted that on page 3, there didn't seem to be parking garages in the pictures, and it is
40 important to be realistic in the photos we provide. Cmr. Katz said the images are more aspirational,
41 as there may not be the perfect parking garage out there, but it is useful to show pieces of what we
42 want to see in the parking garage that will be created. There were no comments on pages 4, 5, 6, or
43 7. For page 8 and 10, Cmr. Larson asked if the picture caption (image L and P) should say "shall" or
44 "should." There were no comments on pages 9, 11, or 12. On page 13, Cmr. Paisner suggested that
45 image S should be connected to a "should" or a "shall" as a good example, since this does seem to
46 be something highly desired. There were no objections to addressing Cmr. Larson's and Chair
47 Paisner's comments in the revised version. There were no comments on pages 14 or 15. Chair
48 Paisner reminded Commissioners to send any other corrections or typos to Mr. Bennett.

1
2 Ch. 18.42.110 Administration

3 Mr. Bennett started on page 15 and 16, and said that it was important in this section to confirm
4 Commissioners are comfortable with the distinction between minor and major review. He said that,
5 it was his impression that, Commissioners were satisfied with wording of subsection 110.A.3. Cmr.
6 Larson noted the detailed time parameters in 110.A.2 are a good practice that other sections could
7 benefit from having. Cmr. Fudge said that on 110.A.3, there were concerns at previous meetings
8 about traffic circulation and internal circulation, so this item should specify that any traffic study also
9 looks at internal circulation. Commissioners agreed.

10
11 Cmr. Saunders noted page 18, line 3, the idea of “more than 10% or 1,000 square feet, whichever is
12 smaller.” He noted that Merlone Geier commented on this previously and said 1,000 square feet was
13 too small and requested it be changed to a 5,000 square footage threshold instead. Cmr. Saunders
14 said it may be good to discuss. Mr. Bennett said if we were to change this, it would also impact
15 18.08.643, page 4’s definition of Minor Town Center Design Review. Cmr. Fudge asked what the
16 smallest 10% threshold would be in Town Center. Mr. Bennett said the 10% probably wouldn’t
17 come into play very much. Ms. Haworth noted that in the EIS, it has the square footages for the
18 buildings within Town Center and noted the numbers. Mr. Bennett indicated that 5,000 square feet
19 threshold wouldn’t be too drastic and it could be changed as long as the definition was also changed.
20 Commissioners agreed they were fine with the change to the 5,000 square foot threshold in this
21 section and the definitions of Minor and Major to align appropriately. Commissioners also noted
22 that even minor changes that would affect the exterior (like an addition) would still require a Design
23 Review Board process. If it is an interior 5,000 square feet, then it wouldn’t require the Design
24 Review Board process. Ms. Pratt noted that after Major or Minor applications were complete, if the
25 applicant needed to make some small change that was less than 5,000 square feet and it met the
26 other criteria, then it wouldn’t have to go through the Design Review Board Process again that
27 they’ve already gone through. Cmr. Lebo asked if Mr. Bennett could provide an updated review
28 process flow diagram. Mr. Bennett agreed to update the flow diagram and provide it to
29 Commissioners.

30
31 Ch. 18.42.170 Development Agreement use in Town Center

32 Mr. Bennett noted that the provisions on the top of page 19 include criteria for what is considered
33 non-negotiable. Ms. Pratt said she was not at the meeting where this particular section was
34 discussed, but she is not clear what the Commission was trying to say on section B.1. Cmr. Fudge
35 said he had also flagged this section as being worded in a confusing way and added that he thought
36 that it needed to be made clearer that the amount of commercial space can be modified but
37 everything else cannot be modified. Commissioners agreed.

38
39 Mr. Bennett asked if Commissioners felt they would need to see this again before recommending it
40 to the Council. After some discussion, Commissioners decided to add a summary of their discussion
41 and concerns highlighted in public comments to a memo to Council and not review the draft again
42 before making a recommendation. Cmr. Lebo noted he would recuse himself from voting on
43 anything relating to the garage. Cmr. Katz moved to recommend sections 2.41, 18.08, 18.42.110, and
44 18.42.170 to Council as amended at tonight’s meeting. Cmr. Morris seconded and motion passed
45 unanimously. Cmr. Katz then made a motion that the Chapter 18.42.100 and the Town Center
46 Design Guidelines for Freestanding Parking Structures (as amended at tonight’s meeting, inclusive
47 of any typo-related edits) be recommended to Council. Cmr. Saunders seconded. Chair Paisner

1 noted Cmr. Lebo is abstaining from this vote. The motion passed (seven in favor, none against with
2 Lebo abstaining).

3
4 Chair Paisner noted he can work on drafting the memo. Mr. Bennett suggested having the memo as
5 the first thing on the agenda for the May meeting.

6
7 **Agenda for Next Meeting:** Chair Paisner noted that he and Vice Chair Larson would work with
8 Mr. Bennett on the agenda for the next meeting.

9
10 **Adjournment:** Commissioners left the Zoom meeting at 9:22 pm, however, there was no formal
11 motion to adjourn.

12
13 APPROVED:

14 _____
15 Joel Paisner, Vice Chair