

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Community Center
1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens
Wednesday, May 21, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: 7: 00 pm by Chair Petershagen

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Gary Petershagen, Vice-Chair Janice Huxford, Linda Hoult, and Tom Matlack

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer Davis, Sammie Thurber, Pam Barnet

STAFF PRESENT: Planning & Community Development Director Rebecca Ableman, Senior Planner Russ Wright and Planning/Public Works Coordinator Georgine Rosson

OTHERS PRESENT: Chair Petershagen welcomed the following members of the public:

Grant Elsworth
Dave Huber

Excused Absence: Commissioner Hoult motioned to excuse Commissioners Davis, Thurber and Barnet, Vice-Chair Huxford second, motion passed 4-0-0-3.

Guest Business: Mr. Elsworth asked if members of the audience would be able to discuss the Soper Hill rezone during the public hearing. Chair Petershagen confirmed there would be opportunity for the public to comment.

Action Items:

Approval of April 2, 2014 Minutes: Chair Petershagen made a correction to the spelling of a guest name (Kyle Mose). Vice-Chair Huxford made a motion to approve the corrected minutes, Commissioner Hoult second, motion passed 4-0-0-3.

Approval of May 7, 2014 Open House Minutes: Commissioner Hoult made a motion to approve minutes, Commissioner Matlack second, motion passed 4-0-0-3. Vice-Chair Huxford asked about minutes from the April 14th joint meeting with council. Director Ableman responded she would provide minutes from this meeting.

Public Hearing:

Chair Petershagen read the public hearing procedures and officially opened the Public Hearing.

Staff Presentation: 2014 Comprehensive Plan Docket Ratification - Senior Planner Russ Wright:

Senior Planner Russ Wright introduced the items for consideration under the 2014 docket. He stated that tonight's public hearing was the first step in the docket ratification process. Planning Commissioners must consider the specific review criteria set out in

Section H of Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan. The action taken is a procedural step to set the 2014 Docket. Planning Commission action is not a recommendation of approval or denial of any amendments. If Council decides to docket the amendments, staff will conduct further analysis and Planning Commission will consider the merits of the proposed amendments and make a recommendation to the City Council. Mr. Wright summarized each of the amendments, including two citizen-initiated amendments to the land use map and two substantive city-initiated text amendments summarized below.

1. RM-1 – Change land use designation on two parcels totaling approximately 3.7 acres located at 1113 SR-204, from Medium Density Residential to Local Commercial. Access to the site would be through existing commercial development off 10th Street SE.
 2. RM-2 - Change land use designation on seven parcels, totaling approximately 9 acres, from High Density Residential and Medium Density Residential to Commercial, and change the land use designation on a single parcel from Mixed Use to Local Commercial. City staff recommends the planning commission extend the Local Commercial land use designation (and Local Business zoning designation) to the adjacent parcel to the east. Combined, these two parcels total approximately two acres. All of the described properties are located near the eastern intersection of SR-9 and Soper Hill Road.
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1. RT-1 – Text amendment to Chapter 5 – the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element, which would add and describe the City Boat Launch Improvement as a project on the Capital Project List of the Parks Element.
 2. RT-2 – Text amendment to Chapter 8 – the Capital Facilities Element, which would add the City Boat Launch Improvement as a capital project and add a pedestrian safety improvement project to the Capital Project List.

Additionally, the city is proposing RT-3 and RT-4 incorporating SEPA documents and updating the dates on the cover, footnotes and the Table of Contents, as standard administrative amendments.

Staff recommended acceptance of the city and citizen-initiated amendments on the 2014 Docket.

Commission's questions for Staff:

- Vice-Chair Huxford asked about RT-2 and lack of specificity for the pedestrian safety improvement project. Mr. Wright responded that the staff report was completed before Public Works staff identified a specific pedestrian safety project. Public Works has since chosen 91st Avenue to concentrate on pedestrian improvements.
- Chair Petershagen asked about the scope of work for the boat launch. Mr. Wright responded the scope will include much more than a new boat launch, it will also include permanent restrooms. The full scope of work is still being developed.

- Commissioner Hoult had several questions that focused on the proposed RM-2 amendment. She asked the difference between Commercial and Local Commercial zoning, and why should there be a higher density commercial zoning in the Soper Hill area? She also mentioned the Soper Hill area is not a designated commercial center area. Mr. Wright responded the Commercial zoning allows for big box stores, while Local Commercial zoning is smaller scale, serving a local population; Mr. Wright also stated the proximity of the Soper Hill location to Highway 9 does lend itself to a larger commercial development. Director Ableman stated the city does have existing commercial to the south and industrial zoning directly to the north of this site. Mr. Wright discussed the zoning on the west side of Highway 9, inside Marysville city limits, which is zoned Community Business and Mixed-Use.
- Commissioner Hoult does not want to see the Highway 9 corridor become like Aurora Avenue.
- Chair Petershagen mentioned development space [along SR-9] might be limited due to overhead power line utility easements that run through this area.
- Commissioner Hoult asked what is considered a minor amendment. Mr. Wright responded that major/minor amendments are based on acreage, RM-2 is considered a minor amendment.
- Commissioner Thurber's written comments were distributed to the commissioners.

Public Comments:

- Mr. Dave Huber, 7304 10th Street SE, B201, Lake Stevens. Mr. Huber is the proponent for the RM-1 proposed amendment. Mr. Huber believes this site is a "natural" for a commercial rezoning. The property is land locked and has site distance issues for any type of access off SR-204. The only access is from the commercial property to the northeast off 10th Street SE. Due to the slopes, even if this property were developed to its fullest potential, the views of neighboring properties would not be obstructed. Mr. Huber stated it makes sense to develop commercial properties on busy highways due to exposure. No critical areas are located on this property except at the south end where there is a ravine.
- Mr. Grant Elsworth, 2628 Soper Hill Road, Lake Stevens. Mr. Elsworth lives near the proposed RM-2 rezoning area. His primary concern is safety. The posted speed limit for Soper Hill Road is 25 mph. According to Mr. Elsworth, the average speed traveled on this road is 37 mph, there are no sidewalks and no shoulders, and is used as a main arterial for Crosswater and other developments to get to the lake. It is also used as a shortcut to Highway 9. If the land use designation of this area is going to be changed, Mr. Elsworth would like to see Local Commercial as opposed to Commercial; he feels Local Commercial would be a better fit for the neighborhood. Mr. Elsworth would like to see "higher quality" businesses go into this area, not fast food or convenience stores, but something more like Mill Creek Town Center. He also mentioned traffic calming devices for Soper Hill as well as making this road a dead end.

Close Public Comment portion of Hearing for 2014 Comprehensive Plan Docket Ratification: Commissioner Hoult made a motion to close the public comment portion

of the hearing, Vice Chair Huxford second, motion passed 4-0-0-3.

Close Public Hearing for 2014 Comprehensive Plan Docket Ratification: Commissioner Hoult made a motion to close the public hearing portion of the meeting, Commissioner Matlack second, motion passed 4-0-0-3.

Discussion by Planning Commission:

- Chair Petershagen asked what type of development can be done on 9 acres, referring to the Soper Hill property. Planning Director Ableman responded, as an example, Fred Meyer has stated in the past they need a minimum of 15 acres to develop.
- Vice-Chair Huxford asked what type of character or “flavor” would be developed for the Soper Hill change. She mentioned the subareas and the thought and care that went into that process.
- Commissioner Matlack expressed concern over both RM-1 and RM-2 creating strips of commercial zoning, or “leap-frog” commercial development, which would be inconsistent with Goal 4.22 listed on page 19 of the Planning Commission packet. Mr. Wright responded the zoning amendments would not create a spot zoning; the amendments would create cohesive areas of commercial activity.
- Vice-Chair Huxford asked if the Planning Commission can make a conditional recommendation.
- Chair Petershagen stated that at this point the Commission’s role is only passing along a recommendation to docket based on the amendments meeting the specific criteria. If Council does docket the amendments, the Planning Commission will have another opportunity to analyze the amendments.
- Commissioner Hoult asked, if the amendments are docketed, can the Commission or staff recommend a different zoning, Director Ableman responded that yes, this recommendation could be made.

Commission Action by Motion - Recommendation to Council:

- Commissioner Matlack made a motion that the Planning Commission forward the docket proposals RM-1, RM-2, RT-1 – RT-4 together with the public comments and commissioner concerns expressed in the May 21st public hearing addressed in the forwarding recommendation letter to City Council. Vice-Chair Huxford seconded the motion.
- Chair Petershagen opposed the motion based on the understanding that tonight’s meeting is just to recommend placing items on the docket, not to make site-specific recommendations.
- Staff reviewed the primary public and Commissioner concerns to include safety, access, scale, design, character, and Commercial vs. Local Commercial zoning.
- Director Ableman suggested making the recommendation, but also adding a statement that Planning Commission and staff conduct further analysis of these areas if the amendments are docketed. The motion was not revised.
- Original motion passed 3-1-0-3.

Discussion Items:

Community Open House Review – Planning & Community Development Director Ableman and Senior Planner Russ Wright:

Director Ableman congratulated the Planning Commission for a great job on the open house. She thanked them for taking ownership and engaging the public in the process.

Mr. Wright went over the survey results and public comments that came out of the open house. The survey results and comments were consistent with the results of the parks survey taken last year. At the time of the meeting, there were 17 responses to the online survey. Commissioner Matlack asked, what is the next step on the update? Mr. Wright responded that right now the active part is the survey. Staff will then go through individual chapters reviewing items that are required in each element. Also delving into the vision question so we have an idea of what entire chapters should look like. Staff will revisit the overall vision, and look at individual visions for each element. Vice-Chair Huxford asked if the survey could be highlighted during Aquafest? Mr. Wright responded the public will have the opportunity to take the survey during Aquafest, either a paper copy or the interactive touch pads will be available.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Matlack mentioned the motor cross track just outside of Granite Falls was approved.

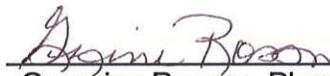
Staff Reports:

Director Ableman informed the Planning Commission that Council is scheduled to approve their work program next Tuesday night. She also noted that she should have some economic development information to share at the next meeting. Chair Petershagen asked if there has been any commercial permit activity, Director Ableman responded that a developer is working on replacing the La Hacienda restaurant building at Frontier Village with a new, three-tenant building.

Adjourn. Commissioner Hoult made a motion to adjourn at 8:17 p.m., Commissioner Matlack second, motion passed 4-0-0-3.



Gary Petershagen, Chair



Georgine Rosson, Planning/Public
Works Coordinator