

Development Commission
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**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Development Commission
MINUTES
April 4, 2018**

City Hall South
Council Chambers

135 E. Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA 98027

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Richard Sowa, Chair
Mel Morgan, Jr., Vice Chair
Michael Brennan
Randy Harrison
Kevin Price
Robert Bakh, Alt.
Richard Sanford, Alt.

STAFF PRESENT

Lucy Sloman, Land Development Manager
Dan Martinez, Assistant Planner
Doug Schlepp, DSD Project Engineer

APPLICANT TEAM & OTHERS PRESENT

Robert Power, Gilman Point LLC
Greg Percich, Jackson Main Architecture
Royce Nourigat, ISD Construction Coord.

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT

Jasmina Mihova
Ray Leong
Ryan Roeter, Alt.
Carl Swedberg, Alt.

CALL TO ORDER

SOWA, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY BAKH that minutes of the Development Commission meeting on September 20, 2017 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous vote of all Commission members present.

PUBLIC HEARING: ISSAQUAH STUDIO LOFTS (Q), PROJECT NO. PRJ 17-00003

An application for construction of one four-story mixed-use building measuring about 47,043 square feet, including two ground-level retail spaces and three stories of individually leased workspaces, and 71 ground-level parking spaces, associated landscaping and utilities, at 160 NW Gilman Blvd.

Staff Presentation

Sloman began staff's presentation. She explained that tonight's application represents a quasi-judicial proceeding for the Commission, and gave information about what "quasi-judicial" means. She asked Commissioners to consider a list of questions intended to indicate whether they can be fair and impartial in considering this application. There were no "yes" replies by Commissioners to any of the questions. She also asked whether any Commissioners have had any ex parte communications on the application, and none were disclosed. She asked whether any audience members had any objections to any of the Commissioners participating in tonight's deliberation, and there were none.

Martinez continued staff's presentation on the site development permit (SDP) permit for the Issaquah Studio Lofts project. He described the location of the proposed project; what the applicant is seeking to develop; gave some background on the original application, which

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included a self-storage facility under construction at the site now; changes to parking provisions since the original application was made; and how the City's moratorium impacts this application. He continued the primary focus of tonight's discussion is on the architecture of the building and to get feedback from the Commissioners and the public, with the expectation that the public hearing will be continued to a future Development Commission meeting (date pending).

He described the Transportation Partnership (Development Agreement) between the City and the applicant, which allows the project to move forward through the moratorium. He explained the responsibilities of the applicant under the Development Agreement, including pedestrian crossings and a four-way signal. He noted that the Development Agreement is included as Exhibit B in the packet.

Martinez continued staff is looking to the Development Commission for feedback about the proposed bus stop on Gilman, and gave a status of the applicant's conversations with Metro Transit to date. He said staff is recommending a condition be added to address this, which will allow the project planning to move forward. He noted discussion of the trail is being deferred to the next public hearing on this issue, pending more information from the applicant.

He described how the application is subject to the Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards (CIDDS). He focused his comments on Chapter 4: Zoning Districts, Uses and Standards and how the City's density bonus program applies to two aspects of this project (FAR and base height), as described in Chapter 5. He explained existing and new circulation facilities (Chapters 6 and 12) and King County's role. What is being proposed today is still pending County approval, he noted, and the City intends to gain an access easement from the County in order for the project to move forward. He showed the existing motorized/proposed motorized and existing non-motorized/proposed non-motorized routes on a diagram. He also showed where a plaza has been proposed by the applicant; block lengths; and where a signal improvement would be added.

He discussed Chapter 6.4.A, Shared Use Routes, and noted this has been the topic of much of the public comment staff has received to date. He described the East Lake Sammamish Trail as it now exists, including photos of it and amenities along it, and noted the applicant would construct additional amenities as part of this project. He continued with Chapters 7 and 13, Community Space, including a depiction of the plaza area, trail and amenities, and pedestrian path/crosswalk from the plaza to the building. He described the building as having a primary entrance that faces Gilman Blvd. He showed an aerial image of several elements required for plazas in a conceptual sketch. He noted that pedestrian-scale lighting is required in the conditions, and noted that staff would like the Commission's feedback on also requiring a raised crosswalk there.

He continued his description of parking provisions in the application (Chapters 8 and 15), noting that the majority of the structured parking would be underneath the building, as well as bicycle parking. He noted this is not a use in the City's existing table of permitted uses, and described the traffic study that was used to determine the appropriate number of parking stalls to be required (64 spaces). He noted the applicant is proposing a total parking-stall capacity of 71. He also described how the appropriate number of bicycle stalls was derived in keeping with the City's bicycle stalls standard, and the reinstatement of a bicycle locker facility. Staff has also added a condition to include motorcycle parking, and is in discussions with the applicant about that now.

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He discussed landscaping requirements for the project (Chapters 10 and 16) and read Conditions 14 and 16 (page 34 of 35) aloud. He gave some background about the existing trees on the site and some of the difficulties with planting trees on the adjacent self-storage site, along the East Lake Sammamish trail, and on the project site. He noted that new trees are proposed near the entrance of the project and in the plaza area, and potentially off-site.

He discussed Chapter 18, Design Manual, noting that a draft manual was approved by Council in May 2017, although a final version was not adopted until December 2017. He gave some background on how the applicant used a draft version of the manual dated July 2017 when they began planning the project. He said the applicant has chosen the Arts & Crafts Style from the Design Manual, and gave the characteristics of that style. Staff's conclusion is that the project complies to a great extent with the standards for Arts & Crafts Style outlined in the manual, although there are some details that do not comply and are subject to conditions. He continued by showing images of acceptable/not acceptable designs in the Arts & Crafts Style and discussed how the proposed application complies/does not comply. He distributed a materials and color board to the Commissioners for their inspection and described the applicable conditions.

He asked the Commission how it would like to have the design manual addressed in the future when reviewing projects. BAKH said he liked the way the questions were presented and staff's indications of whether the City felt the application did or did not comply. HARRISON said he would like the appropriate parts of the manual to be very connected to applications when they are presented because the manual is extremely relevant to making these decisions. SOWA agreed, and said the time everyone spent on the manual is redeemed by having it presented this way, and he appreciates it. MORGAN said he would like to have the entire manual available, including each page of the applicable style with all the information and photos, in future presentations. He said he agreed it is a critical piece of what we are doing, and as our primary toolbox, it would be helpful to have the entire manual available during these reviews. Sloman suggested adding a checklist to the applicable pages in the manual for each project, including the images, and having them available when the Commission looks at these projects. MORGAN agreed that would be valuable.

HARRISON asked whether there could be a summary available on the City's website for each Development Commission decision that included the relevant parts of the Design Manual, and that clearly shows what the Commission based its decision on. Sloman clarified some administrative options for summarizing the Development Commission's decision, and Development Commissioners gave her their feedback. BRENNAN suggested incorporating appropriate links directly into the staff report, so that the appropriate portion of the Design Manual would be immediately available when reviewing the application online.

Martinez concluded his presentation with some responses to comments received since the agenda packet was prepared. He summarized those comments and *responses* as follows:

- (1) Access to the Design Manual (*links were available in the online version on the City's website, but not in the printed version*)
- (2) Parking analysis and comparable uses (*generally technical reports are not included in the staff report but are available to anyone upon request*)
- (3) Material and color board (*presented at tonight's meeting*)
- (4) Design manual color wheel (*not included in the staff report but available in the Design Manual, including which colors are associated with certain styles*)
- (5) Access to DA 17-00001 on the City's website (*access issue has been addressed*)

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- (6) Use of “Not Applicable” in the checklist as a way for staff to dismiss an issue (*seeking feedback from the Commission*)
- (7) “The Plans indicate that trees will not need to be planted to fulfill the tree replacement requirements” (*addressed in conditions*)
- (8) Whether the Development Commission has jurisdiction over technical issues (*clarified in the Development Agreement*)
- (9) Critical area plantings (*located on northwest corner of site behind storage building*)
- (10) How the plaza is clearly designated as a place of arrival and celebration (*open to more discussion with applicant and Commission*)

Applicant Presentation

Robert Power, Gilman Point LLC, gave his perception on the changes from the original application to what is before the Commission today. He spoke to the proposed color palette and said the approved colors are different from what you see on the self-storage building nearing completion at the site, and described how the new guidelines changed the color palette dramatically. He said the colors on the self-storage building are compatible with what is being proposed for this project. He continued with the access difficulties facing Pogacha’s restaurant located to the east of the project, and how the applicant and City have worked to resolve them. He also spoke to the applicant’s responsibilities for the intersection at Gilman and Juniper, specifically a signal. He also discussed work done to date with Metro Transit on relocating existing bus stops and/or locating new bus stops on Gilman and how the applicant is seeking solutions to the tree situation. He said solutions have been identified to almost all of the City’s conditions. He spoke to parking for the new project, and how the appropriate number of parking spaces was calculated.

Public Comment

SOWA opened the hearing for public comment at 8:14 PM.

Connie Marsh, Squak Mountain resident, spoke to what the Development Agreement says is appropriate, and read from it. She questioned whether the applicant should be using the latest draft of the Design Manual rather than the one dated July 2017. She said this project represents a missed opportunity because the City already has right-of-way adjacent to the trail, and this new development has access to the trail. She said she has reviewed the CIDDS recently and was reminded of the importance of ensuring connections. When the Pogacha restaurant is gone, say in 20 years, that lot will face a line of trees and a building wall. She also spoke to other concerns, including the need for shorter blocks for better pedestrian access; putting retail on the side nearest the trail; options for circulation; and keeping the existing trees onsite. She also questioned whether the ditch just off I-90 has been classified correctly or addressed properly in the SEPA checklist. She also said the proposed plaza and front of the building are not the verdant, multi-dimensional frontage envisioned for this entrance to the East Lake Sammamish Trail, and strongly encouraged a meeting with all parties present (Parks Department, King County, Public Works Engineering, etc.) to look at the opportunities where the trails intersect.

Mary Lynch, 2690 Oakcrest Drive, Issaquah, said she supports Ms. Marsh’s comments. She also spoke to her concerns about moving the trail crossing to the other intersection; making sure that the proposed right turn is a safe intersection; and having all the right parties in a meeting, including the community, to discuss how that intersection will work.

David Kappler, 255 SE Andrews St., Issaquah, spoke in favor of the Development Agreement and the proposed signal. He said he agrees with earlier comments about the trail, and said the

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City needs to be sure it is working with King County and the appropriate City departments to be sure there is consensus on how the three trails will come together. He continued people will be using the trail for miles, including families and kids on bikes, and this needs to be a great intersection both visually and safety-wise. He asked for clarification of the box shown on the plan drawings between buildings on the Gilman side. He said he thinks bike lockers are worthwhile because a wide variety of people will be using this facility. He spoke about the problems associated with the cottonwood trees to the north of the site, and questioned why the staff report says that trees can't be north of the water line at the back of the site. He also said he hopes that the applicant will accept the conditions the City has imposed, but the City is essentially using the conditions to get the application in line with the final version of the Design Manual, whereas the applicant planned the project using the earlier version that was available at the time.

George McGrath, 5627 229th SE, Issaquah, said he is a relatively new resident, formerly employed in the private sector in California. He gave his perception of how the SEPA process works in California, and said he supports earlier comments that checklists be used.

Hearing no additional requests to speak, SOWA closed the public hearing at 8:31 PM.

Joint Discussion

HARRISON listed the items for which he would like more information when this item is discussed again, specifically whether the new light at Gilman will be synchronized with other existing lights; the need for any new bus stops on Gilman to be covered; whether the applicant has considered any kind of water feature near the plaza, such as a water fountain adjacent to a dog area, and the need to enhance the plaza area generally; and clarification of "the box" that Kappler referred to in his comments.

Sloman clarified that Gilman uses an intelligent traffic system, but is unsure whether the lights are sequenced or not. Martinez responded all bus stops will be covered.

Greg Percich, Jackson Main Architecture, Seattle, clarified that the box will be used as a community posting board, and functions as a screened wall with parking behind it. He added that the stop light associated with this project is being relocated from further up Gilman, and is not new.

Power said when his firm constructed the medical building behind the post office, the ditch was addressed then. It is classified as a ditch and is on WSDOT property, and was resolved as part of the medical building project. Martinez added WSDOT has indicated they do not want trees planted on WSDOT property where the ditch is located.

SANFORD asked for clarification of the number of parking stalls to be provided, and whether they are all screened and covered stalls. Power replied the current parking count is 71 stalls in response to the conditions of the permit, although it is likely that two stalls will be lost to accommodate motorcycle parking, so the final count will likely be 69 stalls. All are covered, with the exception of the last row, he said. He explained the agreement with the self-storage building next door. MORGAN clarified so there are 48 parking stalls onsite, and noted the staff report does not address a shared arrangement with the building next door. Sloman replied for the time being, the two parcels are being addressed in the permit as a single piece of property, pending a plat to clarify the property line. All the required parking needs of both buildings are met, she added, and said typically there is a fairly low parking demand for a storage building. Porter added there is a recorded easement on file.

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Percich showed the parking on a diagram, including where it is screened and unscreened. He also showed the view of the back of the building from the exit ramp from I-90. MORGAN said he would like to see the view from the Pogacha restaurant next door. Sloman said we can generate that for the next meeting.

PRICE asked a procedural question about how the checklist will be used. When the checklist comes to the Development Commission, will it have been completed by staff, and what would be the Development Commission's opportunity to deliberate whether we agree or disagree with staff's indications of compliance/noncompliance on the checklist. The Commissioners gave some options for how they would like to use the checklist. Sloman said it has been staff's thinking that we would provide the Commission with a completed checklist, and then ask the Commission to let us know whether they agree or disagree with our conclusions. She gave some options for how the appropriate pages in the Design Manual could be formatted to indicate whether staff has concluded the design is or is not in compliance. PRICE said the checklist is a great tool, and his concern is that we are using it in the best way possible. Other Commissioners agreed that it makes sense to spend time debating those areas where Commissioners do not agree with staff than with where there is already agreement. HARRISON suggested having a specific time on the agenda for the checklist to be addressed. Others agreed. Sloman said staff can "take a shot" using the checklist for the next discussion and see how it goes.

PRICE continued that, with the checklist approach in mind, he would like more information about the stair towers and elevator towers as compared with the Arts & Crafts Style in the Design Manual. He explained that contextually, the gables, dormers, and roof do not seem to really fit with the examples of that style. The architect made a note of his comments.

BRENNAN asked for clarification of the status of conversations with the County about the trail crossing. Martinez described the City's conversations with the County so far. Sloman added the County laid out some of the parameters they would apply for that connection so we are aware of them and are incorporating them. Martinez confirmed staff has a high enough confidence level in receiving County approval that we don't have another plan in place.

BRENNAN asked for details about the loading bays and where a bike locker will be located. Percich said we are trying to utilize one loading bay in the self-storage unit and also locate one under the loft building. We have not yet decided whether to locate a 300-square foot bike locker inside or outside the building, he continued, but we do not intend to lose a parking stall in order to accommodate it. BRENNAN asked has Eastside Fire and Rescue reviewed and approved the plan for adequate fire-truck turnaround space. Sloman replied yes.

MORGAN asked for more information about the intersection and stoplight. Martinez showed where lights currently exist on Gilman and where the new intersection will be located. He noted that the City's work on Juniper and Rainier is phase two of this project, and that the developer will be responsible for the stoplight. MORGAN asked are any new bus stops to be added only on Gilman. Martinez replied yes; determining the exact locations will be made in discussions between Metro, City staff, and the applicant.

MORGAN noted condition 17 refers to the requirement for lintels around doors and windows, but does not include the requirement for doors to be recessed, as noted on page 166. Staff made a note of it.

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MORGAN expressed his concern to the architect that the elevator shaft sticks out about two-thirds of the way into the walkway, creating a safety issue when cars enter the site and pedestrians are walking there. Percich said we can easily pull the elevator back and provide more room there.

MORGAN said it would also be useful to know what the parking requirements were for the workspace projects mentioned in the staff report located in north Seattle (Lynnwood) and Renton, not just what the studies indicated was needed. Staff made a note of it.

MORGAN asked why not use the most recent version of the Design Manual for this project. Sloman replied the applicant submitted their plans before the final version of the Design Manual approved in December was available. It seemed unfair to ask them to redesign to a later version of the manual after they had already submitted their plans, she explained.

MORGAN said he agreed with an earlier comment that the trail connection and plaza are a critical intersection that should be a signature feature for the City. He said more people, including the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, the Parks Department, the Mountains to Sound Greenway, and others need to be involved in its design.

HARRISON asked for confirmation that no runoff from the parking lot for this project will impact Issaquah Creek, and noted that runoff has a devastating effect on salmon. Doug Schlepp explained there will be no direct discharge from this project into Issaquah Creek, and explained how stormwater will be managed on this project.

MORGAN said he doesn't think the proposed building looks like it is Arts & Crafts Style, and said to him it looks more like Urban Grange Style. Sloman explained the applicant originally wanted to use the Urban Grange Style, but the Design Manual consultant (Crandall/Arambula) told the applicant that the project had to be Arts & Crafts Style. MORGAN said he disagrees with some of staff's findings that the proposed design complies with some of the items on page 164, such as compliance with the requirement for a steep-pitched roof. PRICE agreed. He said elements of the Arts & Crafts Style are there, but because it is such a broad building, the concept falls apart somewhat. HARRISON asked why did the consultant weigh in on the Arts & Crafts Style choice and not Urban Grange Style. Sloman said she would have to reconstruct that conversation from her notes.

MORGAN asked staff to display page 47 of the Urban Design Manual (Urban Grange Style) and G-0.02 of the proposed project site plan. He said the proposed building looks like Urban Grange Style. PRICE agreed. HARRISON asked what would be the consequences if it was designated Urban Grange Style instead. PRICE said it would require adding some subtleties that would push the design into that direction. BRENNAN said the question is whether that would give us a better product or not. PRICE said in his view, if he was a start-up looking to locate in the Issaquah Lofts building, he wouldn't want his start-up to be in an Arts & Crafts Style building; he would rather it was in an Urban Grange Style building. He also spoke to the importance of context, and said the original building has a stronger relationship to the self-storage building than what is being proposed.

HARRISON said he is uncomfortable starting off the first project under the Design Manual with a compromise, but if changing the proposed building to Urban Grange Style would have a significant impact on the applicant, he's not sure what would actually be gained. MORGAN agreed, and said the proposed building is attractive. BRENNAN recalled conversations when the Design Manual was developed about "blending" or "staying true" to the style categories. He

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said it may be most valuable now to identify what elements of this building we feel need more work. If this project is the first one to be constructed after the moratorium, it will be very visible to the public, and we need to make sure we are comfortable that what they will see matches up with what they have said they want.

SANFORD said in discussions when the Design Manual was being developed, we also said we wanted to provide room for some creativity. The proposed building looks like a modern version of a more traditional style, he stated.

SOWA asked Commissioners to give their comments on the work they would like to see in the next design iteration. BRENNAN said he would like to see some additional detail and creativity at the pedestrian level. He continued the primary use of the building is for the loft spaces, but there isn't a prominent entrance to the main use of the building. The interface with the plaza and the entrance needs more work, he stated. STANFORD suggested that bringing the arched doorways in the Arts & Crafts Style into the design could give it more distinction. MORGAN said his concerns are the elevator shaft location, as noted earlier; using a stand-out color that would be seen too prominently from Gilman; and garage lighting that could be visible from Gilman. HARRISON asked for clarification about the green color shown in the drawings and on the color palette. The project architect confirmed that the color board is correct. PRICE suggested reducing the siding to one type; bringing on more articulation; and possibly pushing the towers in and giving them windows for a better user experience. He continued windows should be in pairings of two or three. If the style is being pushed toward Urban Grange, he continued, the applicant could have more flexibility on the siding type and windows. Generally speaking, however, he said, it's a well-designed building. HARRISON said the entryways could have slight, subtle archways. MORGAN said he doesn't favor modifications to make the design more Arts & Crafts Style.

BRENNAN said another approach is to ask the applicant to present several options that are not a redesign but rather modifications in the details. Sloman noted blending styles is not part of the Design Manual; the approach was to select one style and stick with it.

SOWA asked for comments about modifications that would be more Urban Grange Style. The Commissioners examined photos of Urban Grange Style in the Design Manual. HARRISON said the proposed building fits better with the Urban Grange Style examples. He said he understands MORGAN's concern and agrees with him, and he is not pleased at having to compromise with this first project under the manual's guidelines, but he is not comfortable asking the applicant to change now from what they were directed to do.

SOWA asked the Commissioners what additional work do you expect to receive before our next discussion on this application. PRICE said he agrees with HARRISON that the City has already asked the applicant to shift gears once on this project, and questioned whether the building's appearance and function would change significantly if it is redesignated as Urban Grange Style. He said he is inclined to keep it as Arts and Crafts Style. SANFORD agreed, and said it is an interesting variation on the Arts & Crafts Style. PRICE, BAKH, and BRENNAN agreed to keep it as Arts & Crafts Style. MORGAN said he agrees it is unfair to ask the applicant to change styles again, and it is an attractive building. He noted this is a good test of how projects will fit within the six categories identified in the Design Manual.

Sloman gave her perception of how the process could change as more experience with the Design Manual is gained. SOWA said we wanted the manual to be as prescriptive as possible, and we are now experiencing the consequences of that approach. He said the consensus of the

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Commission is to proceed to the next discussion with the recommendations made tonight that will push the design toward Arts and Craft Style.

HARRISON added he finds the plaza in front of the building to be stark and uninviting. This is an important gateway and gathering place, he continued, and would like to see the design softened and made significantly more inviting.

MORGAN asked about a raised crosswalk near the project entry. BRENNAN said anything that can be done to invite people to the plaza and trail should be done, including a raised crosswalk or other crosswalk treatment. Other Commissioners agreed.

Martinez suggested the public hearing be held open until another meeting is scheduled for either April 18 or May 2, depending on how quickly the work requested by the Commission can be accomplished by staff and the applicant. SOWA agreed.

ISSAQUAH MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS FIELD LIGHTING REVISION: Update to Site Development Permit, PROJECT NO. PRJ 12-00013, MSP 14-00002, SDP 14-00001, and SW 16-00004 (I)

Proposed revision to the site plan for the Issaquah Middle School Master Site Plan and Site Development Permit regarding sports field lighting.

Sloman made staff's presentation. She gave some background information on the Master Site Development Plan and Site Development Permit for this project, approved by the Commission in 2015, and the work that has been done since then. She said tonight's discussion will be about a proposed revision to the permit on sports field lighting. While an administrative decision is allowed by code, staff did not think that doing an administrative adjustment would allow the public and the Commission an opportunity to address this issue.

HARRISON asked how would the conclusions of the Commission after tonight's discussion affect the project. Sloman said the revision request submittal that the City received from the Issaquah School District (ISD) did not meet the original conditions of approval; it is out for corrections now, and we will notify them of any additional information that is needed.

Sloman continued with some context of the proposal, including the land use and zoning designation; gave some background on the project; and displayed images of installed lights and a proposed glare map. She described two letters received at tonight's meeting with citizen comments on the proposed revision from Christina Bruning and Jeff Tanka, and distributed copies to Commissioners.

Royce Nourigat, ISD Construction Coordinator, explained how the proposed lighting will work, noting that there is some adjustability. He said there will be very little light spill, and gave examples of how this type of lighting has functioned elsewhere. He said one of the objectives of installing lighting at the Middle School is to provide more flexibility in scheduling sports and community events. For example, it would be possible to bring over some events that are now held at the High School, which would expand the community's opportunities to use the field. He described the sports field as a fully-fenced, secure area and a community amenity.

Public Comment

James Marsh, 500 SE Evans Lane, Issaquah, said he lives in the Middle School area and attended the original Council meetings when adding a new junior high school was discussed. He said the construction firm building the school has been great, but ISD has been mostly silent

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about residents' concerns. He gave more details about problems local residents have had with traffic impacts, road damage, sidewalks that didn't get built, torn-up areas of roadway and so on. He continued ISD has limited its scope of interest to its property only. He said his question is whether we are building a junior high school for academics or a sports complex. He described how the project has deviated from the original plan, and as the ISD representative tonight said, we seem to be building a sports complex not just for middle school and high school events but for everyone to use. He discussed noise, difficulties in walking near the school when parents are picking up and dropping off kids, high school kids who drive and park improperly, lack of sidewalks in places, how people cut through to avoid traffic, the "faculty parking" area being used to dump garbage, impacts to views, traffic safety issues, lack of enforcement of traffic regulations, and the lack of parking available for residents, particularly during sporting events. He said we are a small neighborhood that is being severely impacted by this project.

Mary Lynch, 2690 NW Oakcrest Drive, Issaquah, said commitments were made during the planning phase of this project for lanes from Evans, a left and right turn onto Second, angled parking at the far east end of Evans, no parking on the north side of Evans, and parking regulations enforcement, none of which has been done. ISD did commit to a gate to control visitors and parents going through the school grounds, but the gate is left open almost all of the time. Pick-ups along Evans are also a big problem. She referred to a letter from the City that notified neighbors that poles were going in for lighting, but questioned the timing of the letter. She said the public was told that lighting would not be part of this project, and said she has researched videos, minutes of meetings, SEPA documents and so on, and has found no mitigation for lighting. The use of the sports field by the public was also not addressed or mitigated. She said it is appalling that the SEPA was approved without appropriate mitigation. She noted that no limits have been placed on the hours the sports fields can be used. How did these poles get approved without a permit, she asked, and what can we do to keep this from happening again and to protect our neighbors. She asked the Commission to postpone making any decision on this until more information is available.

David Kappler, 255 SE Andrews, Issaquah, said the ISD has been arrogant in dealing with SEPA. He said he doesn't know exactly how glare from the lighting will turn out, but there are some real issues that aren't being addressed, such as lack of sidewalks, poorly lit streets, and so on. When this project was first presented in 2015, the public said that parking would be a mess, and it is. He said he recently saw kids in buses waiting 30 minutes to be able to leave school grounds because of congestion from parents picking up their kids. The site is not working, and has bigger problems than the lights, he concluded.

Jeff Tanka, 580 Front Street South, Issaquah, located the community on a map and said he is a resident who can already see school lights, both interior and exterior, from his property. He noted the trees that were taken out during the expansion means that we can now see lights on Second Avenue as well. He described the configuration of his property and the siting of the new middle school, and said the new lighting will light up the sky for us. He also discussed the impacts of the new school on traffic and parking in the lives of residents. He said in 2015, ISD said they had no intention of putting in lighting on this field. Now we are also concerned about amplified sound from extended use of the field, which will be really detrimental for our neighborhood.

Connie Marsh, Squak Mountain resident, said the ISD has a history of not following the SEPA process. She encouraged the Commissioners to ask staff to go back and create mitigations to reduce the impact of the lighting and noise to zero on the lives of residents who live around the school.

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Commissioner Discussion

HARRISON said he is very disappointed to hear that ISD has moved forward with sports field lighting, despite being told when we discussed this in 2015 “not to worry” about lighting because it wouldn’t happen. The need for lighting is one issue, but the arrogance referred to in a public comment is very troubling. He said ISD seems to be building a fiefdom and operating in a vacuum. He said it’s frustrating to know that every point raised by residents tonight was raised by the Development Commission when this project was discussed in 2015. He said he agrees with a public comment that staff should come back with what needs to be done so that the impacts of lighting are mitigated for neighbors.

BAKH said he agrees with HARRISON’s comments.

BRENNAN asked what are the general hours of operation for the sports fields. Nourigat replied that’s impossible to say, and would depend on the event. BRENNAN said he is concerned with the cumulative effect of all fields being used simultaneously, and asked ISD to comment. Nourigat replied hours could be limited, and big events could be scheduled to not take place simultaneously. BRENNAN asked whether the permit conditions pertaining to parking and so are well known and enforced. Nourigat replied we try to be sure the gates are shut but are aware that cutting through the grounds does happen. He said he will take these concerns back to ISD to see what can be done about some of these issues.

HARRISON asked are these events a source of revenue for ISD, providing them with a financial incentive. Nourigat replied ISD receives some income from events at the high school level, but it is minimal.

MORGAN said we have heard complaints on a wide range of issues from the public tonight, but the only question being asked of the Development Commission tonight is about lighting. He said these are significant complaints, some operational in nature, and we don’t have enough information about the impacts, mitigation, and so on to make an informed recommendation on this. He said he does not think there should necessarily be zero impacts on anyone in the community from the lighting; the complex is also an asset and benefits the community. However, he continued, he thinks the Commission should ask staff to go back to a SEPA-type analysis and get more information before we can make a recommendation.

SANFORD said he would like to see specific uses of the sports field by type, frequency of events, time limits for events, and so on, and agreed we need more information.

BAKH disagreed. He said the original agreement stipulated that no additional lighting would be constructed, and we should stand by that decision.

BRENNAN clarified that this is an amendment to an approved permit. Sloman replied yes, it is a revision. She explained that staff met with the Mayor, several department directors, and others to discuss this issue, and the proposed process was for staff to ask the Development Commission to review and weigh in on the revision. The City felt it was vital to have this public conversation rather than to take action administratively only, she continued, and it isn’t necessary for the Development Commission to send it back to Council. Staff can do more research and schedule a follow-up conversation with the Commission if that is what you desire, she stated.

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HARRISON questioned whether the City would be quite as willing to accept this revision if this was a revision from a private developer, rather than from ISD. Sloman said she doesn't think the process would be any different, and gave examples. She explained how SEPA is different when ISD is the lead agency vs. when the City does it for a private project.

BRENNAN said he is leaning toward not making a recommendation tonight and asking staff for more information. He asked whether this action has been subject to peer review. Sloman replied we have asked for certain pieces of information from ISD, but the conditions of approval are essential for them to provide this information, so it's kind of a "chicken-and-egg" situation. BRENNAN said he thinks the Commission needs to have more information so we can understand the specs of what they are proposing to install. Also, this field is right next to residences, so it is surprising that there are no restrictions on how long after daylight hours that these sports fields can operate, he noted. MORGAN agreed, and said other schools in the City have ballfields, and it would be good to know of any restrictions on the hours they can operate.

Sloman asked audience members who are interested in this issue to make sure they have left their e-mail address on the sign-up sheet so that staff can keep them informed.

SOWA noted we have heard many more comments tonight about traffic and unmet obligations about parking and circulation than about lighting. There seems to be more than a little concern about unfulfilled commitments from ISD, he added. Sloman said these permits are not closed out, and based on what we have heard tonight, the City needs to review the permits and determine whether or not all specifications and conditions in the permits were met.

SOWA said the consensus from the Commission is that we are not ready to make a recommendation tonight, and we want to hand this back to staff for more research and information for further discussion. MORGAN asked is the Commission the appropriate deciding body. HARRISON agreed that is a significant question. BRENNAN said that's a procedural question that may or may not be the Commission's to answer. Sloman said it's a fair question, and staff will address it after more discussion with the Mayor and others.

OTHER/ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADJOURN

SOWA expressed appreciation for all the public participation tonight. With no additional business to discuss, SOWA adjourned the meeting at 11:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary

(Note: Alternate Members did not vote at tonight's meeting as there was a quorum of Regular Members present.)