

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Development Commission
SPECIAL MEETING**

7:00 PM
April 24, 2019

Council Chambers
135 E. Sunset Way

MINUTES

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners:

Richard Sowa, Chair
Mel Morgan, Vice Chair
Randolph Harrison
Kevin Price
Richard Sanford

Commissioners Not Present (Excused):

Michael Brennan
Jasmina Mihova
Mark Rigos, Alternate
Ryan Roeter, Alternate
Nischitha Venkatesh, Alternate

Administration/Staff/Other:

Lucy Sloman, Land Development Mgr.
Keith Niven, Econ Dev & Dev Srv Director
Emily Arteche, Senior Planner
Trish Heinonen, Long-Range Plan. Mgr.
Katie Cote, Sr. Planning Consultant

New (Incoming) Commissioners:

Ben Rush
Arthur Schulte, Alt.
Brooke Shore

CALL TO ORDER

SOWA called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Sloman introduced new future members of the Development Commission, whose terms will start May 1 (RUSH, SCHULTE, and SHORE). She noted that Commissioner HARRISON is leaving the Development Commission and joining the Planning Policy Commission. The new members briefly introduced themselves. Sloman explained the purpose of this special meeting is to hear from staff about the City's sign update project and use a mock permit as a training exercise for current and incoming Commissioners.

AGENDA ITEMS

a) **Development Commission Authority Regarding Sign Review, (I)**

Presented by: Emily Arteche, Senior Planner

Arteche introduced the purpose and reasons why the City is undertaking a sign review project at this time. She explained the existing review process in the code, including the Development Commission's formal and informal review processes, as outlined in the staff memo on page 5 of 65 in the agenda.

Arteche discussed considerations in thinking about the Commission's informal process of reviewing sign applications. She displayed a chart of potential areas in the City that would require a Level 3 review, and said the City expects a significant uptick in the number of sign review applications that would be in the Development Commission's purview under the existing sign code. She continued with the Administration's recommendation: *Review and approval of signs would be administrative (i.e., by staff) throughout the City, without additional Development Commission review.*

SOWA asked who is involved when staff reviews and approves a sign application. Sloman replied for commercial signs, review is primarily by planning staff, but engineering staff are involved based on the codes and implications of the signage review situation. Traffic and other sign review is done by engineering staff as part of the overall project review.

SANFORD noted the staff memo specifies a signage reference in IMC 18.11.040, and said there is also a reference in 18.030.40. Staff made a note of it.

MORGAN asked how much time would be required in the informal review process by the Development Commission. Arteche said she doesn't have that information. Sloman added sign permits that require staff review would not have any noticing requirements.

HARRISON asked are illuminated reader signs allowed anywhere in the City's code, and said his primary concern is distracted driving. Sloman replied illuminated reader signs are only allowed at schools.

RUSH asked for clarification of when signs come to the Development Commission for review. Sloman replied signs in Central Issaquah and in the urban villages such as the Highlands and Talus have not come to the Development Commission in the past. When the Central Issaquah Plan was approved, it contained an approach for signage review similar to that of the development agreements. Arteche referred to the criteria for review of signage in the staff memo: *The Commission's sign code responsibilities include a review of sign permit applications for new signs on certain major streets... and in the CBD. Signs that have not required Development Commission review include replacement signs, signs within Central Issaquah or Development Agreement areas, and signs compliant with an approved sign package.*

MORGAN said the Development Commission has reviewed a lot of signs, and he has always felt that the Commission represents the citizens' point of view about the visual effect of potential signs, which can have a large impact on the public realm. He continued he has total faith in City staff to review signage applications, but he has also seen signs proposed in the past that the Development Commission did not like and asked for changes. He said he would not want to have the public part of the review process removed completely, and suggested having the Chair and Vice Chair of the Development Commission be asked by staff to review signage applications. They can also determine whether or not the entire Commission should take a look, he continued. He said he feels the Chair and Vice Chair are likely to agree with staff, but would prefer to keep that portion of the review process intact.

HARRISON agreed. SOWA asked should that then be the consensus of the Commission as direction to staff. SANFORD suggested language something like "The Development Commission Chair and Vice Chair be consulted when issues about signage come up during staff review of signage applications." It was the consensus of Commissioners that staff be given that direction from the Development Commission on staff's recommendation.

b) Mock Permit for Training Purposes, (I)

Introduction by: Lucy Sloman, Land Development Manager and Keith Niven, Economic Development & Development Services Director; Presented by: Katie Cote, Senior Planning Consultant

Sloman gave an introduction to the City's recent moratorium, including the dates it was effective, the purpose of the moratorium, and the products that were the result. She said the mock permit exercise is an interactive way to review a fake permit using one of those products, the Central Issaquah Architecture and Urban Design Manual (Design Manual). She gave an overview of the Design Manual and highlighted changes made as a result of review by the Planning Policy Commission, Land and Shore Committee, and Council, as outlined on pages 7-8 of 65.

MORGAN referred to a project the Development Commission recently reviewed and approved on Newport Way that is not yet built, and asked would it have complied with these new

guidelines on Walls. Sloman replied no; the tallest wall in that project was 15 feet, and although the Commission did require that it include terracing, the foundation stepping design would not have complied with these new regulations.

HARRISON noted that the wall pictured as the second “appropriate” wall type on page 13 of 65 isn’t necessarily “... pedestrian friendly and engaging...” in his view, and said he has reservations about designating that kind of wall as appropriate. Sloman replied that type of wall is intended to blend in and be more of a transitional type of fence than to occupy a highly visible space. RUSH referred to the wall near Home Depot that is maintained by King County as an example of a wall type to be avoided, and asked how a determination is made about choosing a type of wall for structural reasons vs. aesthetics. Sloman said that kind of determination would best be made within the context of the actual project. This page is intended to speak to site walls as well as slope walls, she said.

SANFORD and MORGAN asked clarifying question about Rooftop Use (page 14 of 65). SCHULTE asked whether a noise ordinance would apply to roofs designed for active use. Sloman said that’s a good question; the City did not specify any hour restrictions on rooftop use in these regulations. She continued there are examples of active rooftop uses in the City now, and she’s not aware of any complaints received to date.

SANFORD referred to the information on Materials/Roof on page 11 of 65, and said the caption for the “inappropriate” example says “no cornice or similar element is present.” He asked for clarification about where it is stated that a cornice or similar element is required. Sloman replied the cornice or similar element is addressed under Massing and Scale, not under Materials/Roof.

Sloman concluded her presentation on the Design Manual, and Niven continued staff’s presentation on the Central Issaquah Plan. He described changes in the Central Issaquah Plan made as a result of work by PPC to identify five neighborhoods within the subarea of Central Issaquah. He described how the CIP reflects visions for the five neighborhoods in four categories: Livable, Distinctive, Connected, and Sustainable, along with developer obligations, City actions, and ways to measure success.

He continued the mock project reflects developer obligations for the Confluence neighborhood, which are included in the Project Information piece on pages 19-20 of 65 as project-specific requirements to meet requirements in the CIP and CIDDS.

Cote, Senior Planning Consultant, continued staff’s presentation on the mock project exercise. She described the project as a hypothetical four-story mixed-use building in the Confluence neighborhood, which is in the Traditional Issaquah Architecture District, and noted the project is proposed in the Western False Front Style. She continued her presentation with a description of the project site; a site diagram; the proposed project; first floor and parking plans, and so on (pages 35-39 of 65).

MORGAN suggested giving both the maximum and base information in the column “allowed/required” for all parameters listed, and to change the number given as “approximately” to a more precise number, in Table 4.4 (page 23 of 65). Staff made a note of it.

RUSH asked staff to explain how the FAR (floor to area ratio) of 1.22 was calculated.

SANFORD noted the description of the projects says four stories in some places and three stories in others. Staff made a note of it.

MORGAN asked clarifying questions about “Circulation Design.” He asked would a pedestrian-activated signalized crosswalk be required where people are intended to use the through-block passage and cross the street. Sloman said this primarily addresses the issue of views and vistas, rather than circulation. Where circulation facilities exist, she continued, sight lines to the hillsides have to be maintained, and gave examples. Niven added if this was a real-life application rather than a mock exercise, staff would have routed this application to Public Works Engineering, and they would indicate how they want that crossing to be addressed.

Cote continued her presentation on Circulation/Circulation Design; Community Space and Conceptual Landscape; and Parking (pages 23-29 of 65). HARRISON asked where the nearest mass transit stop would be for residents of this project to access mass transit. Sloman explained that Metro Transit uses its own process to determine the location of transit stops, although the City has regular communications with Metro Transit on transit stops, access, and so on.

Cote continued her presentation on the Developer Obligations, pages 19-21 of 65.

PRICE asked for future applications, will staff make recommendations in the form of conditions and present them to the Development Commission for review and approval. Cote replied if staff feels the applicant had not met its obligations as specified in the “Developer Obligations,” then staff would explain why staff felt that it had not met them and propose a condition. PRICE said so the condition is a performance standard. Sloman replied yes, that is correct.

Cote continued her presentation. The Commissioners briefly discussed the importance of access and signage as ways to encourage people to take public transit (3.2, page 20). HARRISON noted providing covered transit stops is critical in encouraging the use of public transit. The Commissioners also briefly discussed whether or not permanently covered outdoor seating would be appropriate in all projects, and/or in all neighborhoods (1.1 and 3.2, page 20 of 65).

HARRISON asked how an applicant makes a determination to specify a green roof or an active rooftop (4.2, page 21 of 65). Cote said it is up to the applicant, and referred to the City’s Sustainable Building Action Strategy. HARRISON asked is there a significant difference between the cost of a green roof and the cost of an active rooftop area. Cote replied yes. Sloman added the provisions for exiting largely constrains the amount of space that can be used on rooftops. SCHULTE asked is there any overlap for an applicant with meeting the City’s requirement and LEED certification. Cote replied yes; if an applicant was pursuing LEED certification, then that could be an example of meeting the City’s green building objective. Niven added in that instance, staff would have a conversation about the application with the City’s Office of Sustainability, and the staff report would reflect that conversation.

MORGAN asked about the process for giving the Development Commission an opportunity to review the results of issues it raised in an initial project review. Sloman replied the Commission is generally still following a two-meeting format. Issues raised at the first meeting can be addressed in a Briefing Response Memo prepared by staff and discussed at the second meeting.

Cote continued her presentation on the mock Design Review Checklist (pages 41 to 64 of 65). She noted that just those pages of the Design Manual that apply directly to a project will be included in what is presented for an application, and are intended to be used in combination with the entire manual. She also noted the conditions listed under “Staff Proposed Conditions” will not be numbered in future staff reports, and will be presented in their entirety in the staff report.

Sloman also confirmed that Commissioners will receive an electronic version of the staff report and Design Review Checklist about a week before the review meeting, followed by a mailed paper version. Typically staff presents one project per meeting. The first meeting includes staff's presentation, the applicant's presentation, questions by the Commission, public comment, and then Commission discussion and comments. Staff then meets with the applicant to discuss any changes, and a second meeting is scheduled, at which the Commission is typically asked to make a decision on the application. She asked for any comments on the process. MORGAN said since the Commission has the material and conditions in advance of the first meeting, it probably isn't necessary to go through each item, but rather just discuss those items that are of concern to Commissioners and/or that come up during public comment. SANFORD agreed. HARRISON agreed, and said it is important to retain the ability for the Commission to identify additional concerns. Sloman agreed.

PRICE asked who will administer the flow of how the Commission will address the items in the checklist. Sloman said based on the Commission's comments tonight, staff will present the entire checklist, provide an introduction, and address those areas where staff has conditions, although staff can stop at any place where Commissioners have questions or concerns. That presentation would then be followed by the applicant's presentation and public comment, she added.

MORGAN said he thinks this mock exercise has been helpful for Commissioners. Others agreed.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORGAN spoke of his long-standing working relationship with HARRISON on the Commission, and expressed his appreciation for HARRISON's efforts on behalf of the City. HARRISON said it has been a great experience, and spoke of his hope that his service on PPC will be an opportunity for him to contribute to maintaining the character of Issaquah while accommodating its inevitable growth.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, SOWA adjourned the meeting at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary