

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Development Commission**

7:00 PM
May 1, 2019

MINUTES

Council Chambers
135 E. Sunset Way

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners:

Richard Sowa, Chair
Mel Morgan, Vice Chair
Michael Brennan
Kevin Price
Ben Rush

Richard Sanford
Brooke Shore

Commissioners Not Present (Excused):

Mark Rigos, Alternate
Arthur Schulte, Alternate
Nischitha Venkatesh, Alternate

Administration/Staff:

Lucy Sloman, Land Development Mgr.
Keith Niven, Econ Dev & Dev Srvc Dir.
Katie Cote, Planning Consultant
Stacey Rush, Senior Engineer

Others Present:

David Estes, Strotkamp Architects
Mark Graff, SCJ Studio
Mallory Dobbs, SCJ Alliance

CALL TO ORDER

SOWA called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY BRENNAN that minutes of the Development Commission meeting on October 3, 2018, be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

- a) **Evergreen Ford Lincoln Dealership and Service Facility (SDP19-00001), (Q)**

Presented by:

Katie Cote, Planning Consultant

- Staff presentation
- Applicant presentation
- Public comments
- Joint discussion

Staff Presentation

Sloman explained that tonight's issue is a quasi-judicial matter, and explained procedural due process and substantive due process. She displayed questions intended to determine whether or not Commissioners can be fair and impartial in their deliberations. All Councilmembers answered "no." She asked whether any Commissioners have had ex parte communications on this issue. All Councilmembers answered "no." There were no challenges to participation by any Commissioners present. [*RUSH arrived at this time.*]

Cote made staff's presentation. She explained new changes have arisen since the information in the packet was released, and she will be explaining those changes. She continued her presentation with a description of the site; zoning; adjacent land uses; existing conditions; background on the two parcels involved and the property in general; critical areas concerns; notes on infrastructure, particularly stormwater issues; a diagram and description of the site

plan; a perspective view of the proposed Evergreen Ford Lincoln Dealership (EFL) buildings; and a development summary.

She continued with interpretations and explanations of staff's analysis about how the project meets the City's code requirements. She continued with a discussion of how the Architecture and Urban Design Manual (Design Manual) applies to three distinct architectural elements in the proposed plan (the structured parking garage and service facility; Ford dealership; and Lincoln dealership). She explained the issues that are under review now as part of the SEPA review, and noted the SEPA comment period ends May 9, 2019. She said public comment has been received to date on the project's sustainability and stormwater infiltration in CARA.

Cote displayed a map and explained the developer obligations for the neighborhood (Eastlake) in which the project is located. She explained how the project meets the neighborhood vision in four areas (livable, distinctive, connected, and sustainable), including conditions identified by staff, as outlined in the staff report. She explained the parking requirements for the project and what is proposed, and noted the project complies with all applicable parking standards. She described the rooftop landscaping plan; landscaping and tree retention; the existing mitigation area, an area previously restored by WSDOT; building frontage; site design issues requiring conditions; and a site design summary.

She continued her presentation on how the project's design is substantially compliant with Northwest Revival Style, with some outstanding issues on which staff is seeking direction and comment from the Commission. Sloman added there are some aspects of the design that are clearly compliant with the Northwest Revival Style, and other aspects that are subject to the dealership franchise standards, and on which staff and the applicant want to hear from the Commission. Cote briefly explained the ways in which the design of the buildings proposed meets the intent of the Northwest Revival Style.

Applicant Presentation

David Estes, project architect, Strotkamp Architects, said the project team, many of whom are here tonight, would like to get feedback from the Commission, and so would prefer to answer questions Commissioners might have.

Public Comments

Connie Marsh, Squak Mountain resident, said her concern is what is missing from the SEPA, and spoke of what she sees as the City's move to push off mitigation to the permitting phase. She gave examples of what she sees as missing in the SEPA, such as why the project requires reducing the buffer by 25 percent and how wildlife corridors will be addressed. She said the SEPA also doesn't address the impacts to the environment in other areas, such as building a new bridge. She gave her perception of what the buildings will look like from the street to the public, and how the project doesn't create a "natural interface" with the surrounding natural area. She said she has additional SEPA comments and also has questions about how the project will meet sustainability, and also spoke of how contributions made by developers to the City's tree bank is not working well for the City, particularly for tree maintenance.

Joint Discussion/Questions

SANFORD noted that the number of parking spaces to be provided is given as 300 in some places in the document and 470 on page 75 of 145. Cote replied some versions of the applicant's earlier plans included the display stalls in the parking stall count. The display area that functions as merchandising is included in the FAR calculation but the structured parking is not, she clarified.

SANFORD asked how will the pavilion be used. Cote replied the pavilion is not required, and is a feature the applicant wanted to include. Its uses are not fully developed at this point, she stated. SANFORD asked will there be parking, or a pedestrian walkway, around it. Estes replied there will be a walkway from the street to the dealership and pavilion facility. The cars to be housed there will be for display only, not for sale, but we will have the potential to move those cars out and open up the building for a community event, such as a grand opening. We have had extensive discussions about it, he added.

BRENNAN said the build-to line for the pavilion requires 82 feet, which is more than the 60 feet shown as provided, and asked how will that be addressed. Cote replied the requirement is that 60 percent of the frontage be occupied by building or alternative frontages such as an architectural element. SHORE clarified that condition #13 requires "an additional 22 feet of alternative building frontage elements," not 12. Cote replied 22 is correct. Estes clarified since frontage was not required at the off-ramp side, the building design wrapped around there, and we are hoping that 20 feet of L-shape would count toward the frontage requirement. Estes said we may need to reconfigure that building. Sloman said staff can respond to that issue in its Briefing Response Memo.

PRICE said he would like to hear more background on the design review requirements from the franchise, where there is flexibility in that criteria, and what happens if the franchise requirements are not met. Estes described the back-and-forth negotiations that have taken place with Ford to meet the City's requirements and also the franchise requirements. He described the issue of the brand wall, the glass curtain, and the entry as examples of features that Ford requires. He described the back-and-forth conversations that took place about the limestone wall panels. PRICE asked the applicant whether they were aware of the City's design requirements when they purchased this site. Estes replied that was eight years ago, so no.

MORGAN asked what is represented by the horizontal stripes on the building diagrams. Estes and Cote gave details about the windows and materials intended to be used there.

SOWA asked for clarification of the parking summary slide. Cote replied 123 is the minimum number of vehicular parking spaces allowed, and 246 is the maximum. The proposal is for 300 total spaces, 64 of which are surface spaces and are included in the 300 figure, so the proposal is for 236 vehicular parking spaces. SHORE asked does that include display spaces. Cote replied no.

SOWA asked for clarification of the issues raised in the letter dated April 29, 2019 from Sammamish Water Plateau. Mallory Dobbs, SCJ Alliance, spoke to the stormwater management design for the site, including the treatment systems that meet both Ecology and the City's stormwater requirements. Cote noted that the plans that Sammamish Water Plateau reviewed have evolved and some new alternatives that been developed since their letter was written. She said staff feels there is a path forward without significant redesign.

SHORE asked does the proposed stormwater design meet the Class 1 CARA that the Sammamish Water Plateau is referencing. Stacey Rush, City Development Engineer, replied yes. She said we are still working on the details of the design. BRENNAN asked so can the solutions be implemented without triggering significant redesign of the site. Rush replied yes; there should be no changes needed above ground or require any changes in building design.

SANFORD asked is a rain garden part of the technical part of the design. Rush replied a rain garden in the stream buffer was in the first iteration of the plan, but the design changed to remove rain gardens. Dobbs added rain gardens were removed when they were determined to

be inappropriate, and there will instead be a bio-retention area as part of the frontage improvements.

Estes added of the nine concerns in the letter from Sammamish Water Plateau, we have already been working on five of them. We do have an updated stormwater management plan that will cover those five, he added. In addition, Ecology has issued information that contradicts points 8 and 9 in the letter. He explained why other allowed approaches were not used.

SHORE asked are there any special provisions for spill prevention. Estes explained the design meets all current standards and requirements, including the use of double tanks. Rush noted the building has car-wash and maintenance bays that drain into the sanitary sewer, not into the aquifer, which was also referenced in Sammamish Water Plateau's letter.

SHORE what was the criteria used for reducing the buffer. Cote replied a buffer reduction of up to 25 percent is allowed if a study is performed and mitigation is provided. MORGAN asked is a buffer reduction open to all applicants who do a study and provide mitigation. Cote replied no; the reduction is just a space buffer and not an enhancement, so in order to reduce the buffer, it must also be enhanced. Sloman gave several examples of how a buffer reduction request would not be granted. Mark Graff, SCJ Alliance, landscape architect, said the buffer in question has already received some mitigation by WSDOT. He described what exists now and what is planned to meet the requirements of the City.

PRICE asked for information on screening on the roof of the garage. Graff said the details are still being worked out, but our intent is to vegetate the roof on trellises and in planting beds. Estes clarified there is potential in other areas to add more plantings, and showed them on a diagram. PRICE asked are the parts to be screened those that are most visible. Estes replied yes, plus the whole perimeter is screened on this level to make the Northwest Revival Style work and also for safety. PRICE asked what about the lower openings where cars are visible. Estes replied locations of displays are available in two areas and those areas don't have 42-inch concrete screens.

BRENNAN asked about tree retention on site. Graff said we looked at ways to save trees on site, and even though we are planting hundreds of trees on site, we can't meet the tree retention requirements by saving trees alone, so we will be contributing to the City's tree fund.

SANFORD referred to condition #5 in the SEPA review to "... increase tree planting to cover the entire buffer enhancement area." Is that the area in question, he asked. Graff replied that is related to the buffer enhancement, and the plan has been changed to plant the entire buffer with trees, shrubs, and ground cover. MORGAN asked will the trees along I-90 be large deciduous trees, and noted they will be very visible to people coming down the off-ramp. Graff showed where the trees will be located on a diagram, and said it is actually not easy to see into the site from the off-ramp. He said the Zelkova trees to be planted will eventually be 60 feet tall.

MORGAN asked for clarification of removing the compensatory flood easement mentioned in the SEPA review on page 19. Cote explained a nearby project recently received an easement to use this site for compensatory flood storage, but it is no longer needed and that easement is being extinguished.

MORGAN asked can cars hang over into the buffer zone, or is a wall, fence, railing, or other barrier needed. Cote replied they are not allowed to overhang, but staff hasn't put a condition on that. Sloman replied she assumes that at a minimum, a curb there would be there. Staff made a note of it.

MORGAN referred to the new condition #32 on a bridge as part of the deviation for landscaping. Who makes that decision, he asked. Sloman replied it would be a joint decision with Public Works Engineering and Development Services staff. Cote replied the bridge exists; this would pertain to frontage improvements required to the bridge. Sloman said there isn't much question that it wouldn't be approved.

MORGAN asked questions about how the City's tree fund is managed, particularly for tree maintenance. BRENNAN suggested that the Commission receive a briefing on the City's tree fund, particularly about its effectiveness. Staff made a note of it.

SHORE asked whether comments submitted by Lakeside Industries have been addressed. Estes replied the Traffic Impact Analysis has been revised. Lakeside's concerns were based on the total trips per day and not peak hour trips, but changing the hours used in the analysis resulted in very minor changes to the results. Sloman added we were able to incorporate Lakeside's concerns consistent with the process the City used to evaluate traffic for the project.

SANFORD noted that condition #30 states "... may be located behind the curb," and asked whether "may" should more appropriately be "shall." Cote replied yes. SHORE asked what is planned for the rest of that corner. Sloman said Public Works Engineering is working on that now.

MORGAN noted data appears to be missing from the table on page 27. Staff made a note of it.

SHORE asked what changes could occur during permitting that would come back to the Commission for review. Cote said staff's goal is for the completed development to be built essentially as it has been presented in terms of the materials, appearance configuration of major site elements, and so on. Internal changes or changes that did not substantially affect the appearance or major elements of the site would be handled administratively.

MORGAN asked Niven whether minutes of the Rivers and Streams meeting where this project was discussed can be made available in the next agenda packet. Niven replied the Rivers and Streams Board will meet again on May 21, and he will try to get those minutes to the Commission. The minutes from that meeting will primarily indicate that the project was discussed, and that the Board acknowledged the buffer reduction and wanted to see more about the landscaping plan.

Discussion: Design Manual

SANFORD referred to page 125 in the Design Review packet, and said he is having trouble matching the design proposed tonight with the description on that page of the Northwest Revival Style. The same is true of the description of scale on page 127, he continued. He said he understands that the Northwest Revival Style is probably the best choice available for this applicant, but he needs help understanding how the proposed project fits that style. It fits better with the Northwest Contemporary Style, he added.

MORGAN said he doesn't think any of the styles allowed in the Design Manual in Central Issaquah were designed to accommodate car dealerships.

SANFORD noted the project is situated right at the border of central Issaquah, so perhaps the Northwest Contemporary Style could be considered on an exception basis for this project based on its geographical location.

Niven said staff's intent was to hear from the Development Commission tonight about the general direction you would like to move, then staff can take that direction and figure out what makes sense. Staff's job is to write a decision that is defensible, he continued, and we can work toward that depending on what direction the Commission wants to move.

BRENNAN said he understands the challenge the applicant is facing about corporate branding, and he also understands the importance of promoting economic vitality for the City. It is hard to balance those factors with the vision for the City that we collectively have said we want to go. He said he would like a better understanding of the Commission's flexibility in applying the Design Manual, and its ability to bend and interpret what is there. Sloman said she would echo Niven's previous remarks, and noted that the two-meeting review format the Development Commission follows allows for staff and the applicant to respond to the Commission's feedback. She said two obvious solutions are to look at Northwest Revival in the urban core for this project on an exception basis and to look at how to bend the Northwest Revival style parameters to result in compliance. There may be other solutions, she continued, and she would recommend that the Commission concentrate on providing staff with its thoughts, concerns, and preferences so staff can figure out the mechanism by which to achieve them.

The Commissions discussed their recollections of discussions during the time that the Design Manual was being prepared. They briefly discussed the advantages and disadvantages of making adjustments and modifications to the project design, especially given the franchise restrictions, rather than discard the style parameters. PRICE spoke in favor of finding ways to edge the design closer to the Northwest Revival Style by changing some structural elements to have more of a vertical orientation. Others agreed. BRENNAN said he favors trying to apply the style guidelines to the structured parking garage; in other words, to try to stay with the style and make whatever changes are possible to bring it closer to compliance. He said because other buildings could potentially be constructed near the project, we would want an architectural connection to this project. PRICE agreed, and said this project could be setting a tone for that area.

Estes noted the column grid on the parking structure will use color to emphasize its verticality. He explained how the design has tried to include the essence of the Northwest Revival Style, and said the applicant team has pushed its parent company (Ford) about as much as is possible in trying to accommodate the guidelines for the Northwest Revival Style.

The Commissioners briefly discussed the option of allowing the project to be designed as Northwest Contemporary on an exception basis. BRENNAN said his preference would be to stick with Northwest Revival and ask the applicant to look at further adaptations. SANFORD said he is hearing from the applicant that no more adaptation is possible. Sloman said she is hearing from the Commission that the parking garage in particular needs more attention, particularly a better explanation of how it meets the verticality requirements. BRENNAN agreed, and said he would like to see more detail about how the design does comply.

MORGAN said he is also concerned about the Ford and Lincoln façade, and referred to staff's notes on pages 129 and 131 about the inappropriate use of metallic panels and glass curtain walls.

After additional discussion, it was the consensus of the Commissioners to ask the applicant team to see what modifications can be made to bring the project design into more compliance with the Northwest Revival Style. Specific requests for more information included the following:

MORGAN asked that the new design information address a method to prevent vehicle overhang into the buffer zone; ensure that Sammamish Plateau Water's concerns, expressed in their letter dated April 29, 2019, are satisfied; additional garage screening of cars; and more information about the proposed lighting plan.

BRENNAN asked for more information about the pavilion building and the build-to line issue there; what the façade will look like to pedestrians and cars going by; and more information about plans for the rooftop and screening.

SHORE said her particular concerns are water protection and screening on the ground.

Sloman noted public comment for this issue will continue until the next meeting when the project is discussed. She continued the Development Commission's schedule for the next few weeks includes meetings on May 7 and 15 on the Shelter Holdings issue; a training session with the Planning Policy Commission on May 29; and a continuation of tonight's discussion on June 5 (details available on the City's web site).

MORGAN expressed appreciation to staff and the applicant for the work represented in tonight's presentation from all parties. PRICE added it is important to note that the owner did not anticipate developing this project subject to the City's Design Manual when they purchased this property, and he especially appreciates the applicant's challenges in complying with the Design Manual.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The next meeting on this permit application is currently scheduled for June 5, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers. The Commission will elect officers at this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, SOWA adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary