



MINUTES

Special Joint Meeting

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

6:30 p.m. -Thursday, February 10, 2022

Alternate Meeting Format: On March 6, 2020 the Mayor declared a civil emergency due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 24, 2020 the Governor issued Proclamation 20-28 relating to the COVID-19 emergency and open public meetings. The proclamation has been extended. Due to these factors, the meeting was held using a remote meeting platform.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Faul.

Planning Policy Commissioners Present:

Chair Faul, Commissioners Bader, Lewis, Milligan, and Zaragoza

Absence:

Vice Chair Voiss (Excused)
Commissioner Monahan (Excused)

Development Commissioners Present:

Chair Brennan, Vice-Chair Price, Commissioners Morgan, Sanford, Shore, and Sowa

Absence:

Commissioner Schulte has submitted resignation
Commissioner Dillon (Unexcused)
Commissioner Ikeda (Unexcused)

Staff Present:

Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, CP&D
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner, CB&D
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager, CP&D
Lucy Sloman, Current Planning Manager

2. Approval of Planning Policy Commission Minutes

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- a) Chair Faul asked if there were any comments or changes to the Special Joint PPC and DEV meeting minutes of January 20, 2022 and there were none. The minutes were approved.
- b) Chair Faul asked if there were any comments or changes to the Special Joint PPC and DEV meeting minutes of January 27, 2022 and there were none. The minutes were approved.

3. Public Comments (General)

- There were no written comments or requests to speak.

4. Regular Business (00:06)

- a) **Title 18 Zoning & Development Standards: Circulation and Parking (D)**
Presented by Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Padua presented the topics, to be discussed separately. The first topic was Circulation.

CHAIR FAUL opened Commissioner questions (00:14).

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for the definition of *future* in the slide regarding Future Considerations Regarding Transit Facilities. Padua replied that what near-term and long-term changes to the transit system should look like to accommodate growth and planned light rail is the focus. Code needs to be easier to interpret regarding how potential changes will be accommodated either in new development or public projects. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding a slide indicating that other actions would occur *after that*. Padua replied that with the development of the transit study, what the transit network should look like over time will also be examined, and a date is difficult to specify as Sound Transit will ultimately decide where light rail will be, not ready for the discussion until at least 2028. There are several years to begin preparations and planning for the discussion, but changes cannot be made until decisions are made by Sound Transit and WSDOT.

CHAIR BRENNAN stated that road profiles and design standards create character for certain parts of the city and asked if the intent of consolidation of design standards and eliminating redundancy is to merge toward a consistent standard, or if character still be preserved such as in the Highlands and Old Town. Padua replied that regarding consolidation within circulation, all various sections of code are being moved to one section. Road profiles will not change. The only exception is the Mobility Master Plan defining new policies regarding where certain walkways or bicycle facilities should be installed. Roadway profiles will be updated to be consistent with the Mobility Master Plan, but overall characteristics for neighborhoods will be preserved.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated having experience on the Urban Village Development Commission (UVDC) and that as documents are consolidated into a single code, draft

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documents should clearly lay out policies, what was before and why merging is occurring, similar to the gaps analysis but with background for understanding.

CHAIR FAUL opened Public Comment (00:20).

- Connie Marsh stated living on Squak. Consolidation into one area for understanding makes sense, but problems outlined are not the problems Marsh as a citizen has with circulation. There are huge difficulties with the private sector building to public roads and there is no public process for a community to input into the project. A project at the Development Commission stage is outside of purview. The Transportation Advisory Board does not consider, and the community is left out of roads projects and details the public will live with daily. Public roads are considered not zoned with very few rules within Title 18 or any code. There is a toolkit for the building of public roads and facilities, but the toolkit is not effective. There is no consistency for the public to understand roads projects public or private. A solution isn't known but the issue should be addressed. Another question is what criteria will be used to decide when standards do not need to be met.

CHAIR FAUL closed Public Comment (00:24).

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated agreement with steps being taken and having the information in one place for a developer to fully understand needs, including if variance is possible.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER MORGAN and stated that some things may be done in advance of Sound Transit decisions that will help chart a stronger course for the desires of Issaquah. Being at the end of the line will be a challenge. Preplanning in Redmond helped to prevent Sound Transit from taking over areas of the city for facilities that Redmond did not want taken. Issaquah should not offer a blanket statement to Sound Transit. Road standards would be discussed further in the Parking portion of the discussion, and the comment of Marsh should be examined.

CHAIR FAUL stated agreement with COMMISSIONERS MORGAN and MILLIGAN. The points of Marsh are important regarding street standards.

Dhaliwal replied that the comment heard from Marsh is that a process is needed for both public and private roads when there is not an associated Land Use Permit approved by the Development Commission or a public process built in. Stand-alone roads and access points need a public engagement process. Another need is for a more robust, transparent process for deviations from adopted standards for street frontage, and guidance regarding what the process looks like, who makes the decision and what criteria is used to grant deviations. The comments will be kept in mind as a re-write occurs.

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Padua asked about the relevance of having through-block passages specific to Central Issaquah or city-wide; at this time, standards are not clear on when through-block passages are necessary. Currently, there are passages that do not make sense.

COMMISSIONER SANFORD replied that when Architecture Urban Design Standards were drafted for Central Issaquah, the context was in reference to a grid. Moving out of the grid, the standard makes less sense. There is a possible problem that could be encountered with a development outside of the context

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated also having served on the UVDC and expressed general support for through-block passages, particularly as they have been implemented in Issaquah Highlands, an important tool to reduce massing and a necessity for pedestrian circulation. Through-block passages are different sizes and scales depending on location. A sneaker sidewalk is important to encourage efficient pedestrian circulation. Issaquah Highland standards for through-block passages could be considered and improved as necessary.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER SANFORD. The Development Commission did not work on Issaquah Highlands. Any through-block passage should have reasonable end points at both ends before being required in a location.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated support for the comments of COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN regarding through-block passages, and that through-block passages should be in Old Town as well as expanded throughout the city. A designated area where the passages should not exist would be the exception.

COMMISSIONER ZARAGOZA stated agreement with COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN. The passages are very functional in row home developments and create a village feeling. A list of reasons and goals should be created as different situations will be created in different types of neighborhoods. The rules for passages need to be more dynamic. Passages should be considered in any zone.

CHAIR BRENNAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER ZARAGOZA regarding the purpose a through-block passage provides, and from other COMMISSIONERS that there needs to be a destination. The purpose will be different in residential or commercial zones. Passages not only break up a residential block but also building massing. Code needs to be clear regarding through-block passages to ensure purpose.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated that a through-block passage is often on private property but still a public facility. Through-block passages are invaluable in any area of the city, but liability could be addressed more in code.

CHAIR FAUL stated agreement with COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN and stated that the Atlas project may be an example of failure.

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Padua stated that there had been one more public comment on street standards. Staff is updating Public Works Street Standards as a part of the process. Street standards have not been updated since 2010.

Padua continued with the topic, Parking (00:42).

CHAIR FAUL opened Commissioner questions (00:48).

COMMISSIONER SANFORD stated that there will be aspects in code specific to neighborhoods or geographic areas and asked if there would be a city-wide section as well as a neighborhood overlay section. A structure similar to Architecture and Urban Design would be the most intuitive for users. Padua replied yes, simplification is the goal. COMMISSIONER SANFORD asked for clarification that this would not be parallel to Architecture and Urban Design with separate sections for city-wide versus neighborhood overlays. Padua replied that the information is in the context of explaining the intent between different sections but is not the table to be provided in code.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked for clarification regarding how much will be changed versus consolidated and clarified, and if the current basic core for structured parking will still be required. Padua replied that the intent of the project is to preserve all regulations as much as possible. What is identified on a white board list will be items to be addressed after the current Title 18 update project. Leeson replied that structured parking was updated as part of the 2016 moratorium, adopted in 2017. COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked for more detail about public parking on public streets for private enterprises. Padua replied that Affinity Groups agreed that on-street versus off-street parking and requirements should be considered in city code. In newer developments requiring off-street parking, the parking is not being used and people are choosing to park on-street for convenience. Several comments were that incentives or another tool should be considered which incorporates on-street parking as part of the broader context of what is being provided for new developments. For off-street parking, requirements and how affordable housing goals can be met, balanced with the original intent of parking structure requirements and aesthetics, as well as a pedestrian friendly environment are needed. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that a group that was missing from Affinity Groups was Neighborhood Community Involvement. Parking study results had been a surprise to the Commission, not necessarily reflecting comments from the community. What times the transit center would be at capacity and by how much was missing from surveys. and this information could be provided by people using the facilities. More details need to be addressed.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if, after questions and public comment is completed, staff could help the Commissioner discussion by displaying the Affinity Group slide or one of the other slides to break up the topics for efficiency in thoughts.

CHAIR FAUL asked Padua if there would be a presentation regarding the Affinity Groups. Padua replied that there would be a high-level summary of the group comments throughout the presentation.

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CHAIR FAUL stated that if there is not prescriptive direction, there will not be bicycle parking. Affinity Groups do not tend to include bicyclists. E-bikes need places to lock up to. If people are to be moved to alternative modes of transportation, E-bikes are easier, cheaper, and faster. Allowing developers to continue to dismiss bicycle parking will be destructive and prescriptive direction should be part of Title 18. Padua replied that the Title 18 update will clarify what is required and keep current requirements. Regarding Affinity Groups on giving developers more flexibility, comments were to not become more prescriptive with additional requirements, in example, using a specific type of steel or using specific shapes. Bike parking will be in code, but developers will have the flexibility regarding the amount or design of bike parking to fit the design of the development. CHAIR FAUL thanked Padua as language had been interpreted as the issue would not be addressed in the future.

CHAIR FAUL opened Public Comment (01:03).

- Connie Marsh stated that the conversation is losing history of how parking has arrived at this place in time. Clustering parking together also clusters landscaping within parking. The city must be careful not to lose neighborhood characteristics. In the Central Issaquah plan, there is verbiage that trees are not required and that metal vertical structures can be substituted in a parking lot. There is circulation within parking that prohibit pedestrians from older shopping centers as there are no sidewalks going in or out. Some circulation within parking lots should be a top criterion for bringing up to standard. Safety is a top priority for a successful parking area and standards in Issaquah do not necessarily create this. Marsh stated not experiencing parking as the grid shows. The Central Issaquah plan states clearly in EIS that structured parking is required, but each store seems to have individual parking. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on a holistic system. There are known regular functions held, in example, at the School District, and some management strategies could be employed in special events. There is language within the Comprehensive Plan and the issue would not need to be on a white board. There is no lighting for safety in Old Town public parking and there should be lighting standards for public areas as well as private areas. Lastly, Marsh stated having been involved in obtaining the through-block passage mentioned during the Circulation discussion that did not have perceived end point, but the intent was to make a parallel passage to Gilman Boulevard which is not pedestrian friendly; safe and pleasant places to walk are needed and how those corridors will be created needs to be addressed.

CHAIR FALL closed Public Comment (01:10).

COMMISSIONER SANFORD asked what scope of input is desired from the Development Commission and for clarification that discussion of white board items is not a part of this meeting.

Padua asked CHAIR FAUL if the suggestion of COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN to separate issues to make the discussion more organized should be done. CHAIR FAUL agreed.

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Padua replied to COMMISSIONER SANFORD that any thoughts on items even on the white board would be helpful for staff to be able to prioritize topics for the Title 18 Update project. COMMISSIONER SANFORD stated that there appeared to be concern regarding structured parking below ground in terms of the high-water table. There hasn't been much discussion regarding municipal structured parking or parking lots. The city could provide municipal parking close to areas of high concentration or interest and not necessarily next to the high-density area of interest, a quarter mile walk that is a pedestrian and 1st floor retail friendly area. Structured parking can be above ground due to the water table with the building hovering above parking, but this would defeat the intent of having an engaging first floor public realm that is retail friendly. Developers might pay into a parking fund with the purpose to construct and maintain municipal parking and areas. CHAIR FAUL replied that parking could also be located on roofs to save space and solve the problem.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated agreement with consolidation of documents, off-street parking requirements and simplifying the parking occupancy metrics. Transportation Management Plan criteria could be dismissed as a requirement. COMMISSIONER MORGAN agreed with contextual parking requirements separated between, in example, Central Issaquah and Old Town. Shared parking code language should be examined, a great way to get more use from parking. Bicycle parking encourages riders, and ground-floor retail space could include bicycle parking facilities to activate the area. Structured parking should continue to be examined to avoid fields of parking. A tool to allow parking requirements to evolve would be helpful.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER LEWIS regarding the parking study which did not appear to reflect the experiences of the community. Street parking without controls causes an unfair allocation of use and as Issaquah will be an even larger end unit for transit for East King County, parking for resident and businesses rather than for transit needs to be discussed earlier rather than later on a white board. Consolidation will change code in some ways. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN agreed with COMMISSIONER SANFORD regarding municipal parking; the city can support economic development with municipal parking and facilitating short distance walking in retail districts is brilliant. As an example, Mercer Island has avoided commuter parking lots near transit by restricting parking at certain times of day. Code should allow creativity in street right-of-way uses by slowing streets down with angle parking.

Padua asked to address comments. The largest barrier to municipal parking is cost. Kirkland has been proactive in providing municipal parking lots and the most recent, 65 flat surface parking stalls, cost \$1 million. Stalls in a parking garage or large structure rise in cost to approximately \$100,000 per stall. Investment from developers is a good idea but the contribution may not be enough and may require additional public funding. Commissioner comments indicate that the issue should be examined again, however.

Padua stated next steps; working through code and meeting again with Affinity Groups prior to bringing the topic back to the Commission possibly in June 2022.

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COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated appreciation for addressing bicycle parking and Affinity Group comments, although the Affinity Groups do not appear to acknowledge that there is a problem regarding bicycle parking. Bicycles are not being parked because there is no safe, visible place to park.

CHAIR BRENNAN stated that consolidation and creation of a predictable set of metrics make sense. The Transportation Management Plan is difficult to provide oversight on, on an ongoing basis, without an established oversight program. Some projects offer a unique set of parking needs but not well-defined, and code allowing for a deviation from standards with a parking study should be considered as an alternative. Moving toward multi-modal transportation systems, all types parking must be accommodated for. Shared parking between properties or a Park One for a specific area are good ideas. There are many different opinions. The pieces being advanced make sense.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that bicycle parking must be safe and visible. There is detail in policy, but the perspective of the Affinity Groups is different. How to reinforce current policies with prescriptive language is needed. Issaquah is not getting what is needed at this time.

5. Reports

- a) **Council Update (01:38)**
Presented by Christen Leeson, Senior Planner

Leeson stated that there are several agenda items going to Council on February 22, 2022.

Dhaliwal stated that the Council study session regarding Title 18 was held on February 7, 2022. A report on all Board and Commission progress with links to agenda packets were shared. Each of the six topics will be moved to Council for discussion following each Public Hearing for additional considerations for Board and Commissions for efficiency. An Open House on Natural Environment went well, and Open Houses will continue to be held for questions and answers prior to each Public Hearing, although staff can also be reached at any time for information. Timing concerns were expressed. All property owners and residents will be receiving a postcard informing of the Land Use code update and Open House information; Council asked to add additional language content which has been incorporated. Content will become more technical going forward.

6. Other Business/Announcements

- a) **Upcoming Schedule**

Leeson had no calendar updates.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, CHAIR FAUL adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary