



## MINUTES

### DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Wednesday, January 15, 2025

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#### 1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by CHAIR SANFORD.

Commissioners Present: Chair Sanford, Commissioners Brennan, Fasehun (Alt), Gilbert, Ikeda, Morgan, and Price

Absent: Vice-Chair Shore

Staff Present: Christen Leeson, Principal Planner  
Amanda Jackson, Meeting and Records Assistant  
Emily Medina, Associate Planner

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- a) Minutes of December 04, 2024

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked to clarify an answer to a question by Commissioner Morgan in the Minutes regarding quorums. When there is a quorum of four or more, the majority represents the action of the Commission, so a quorum of four would require three votes to pass a Motion. COMMISSIONER MORGAN replied that the Minutes represent the discussion. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated a desire to clarify the rules of the Commission.

With no corrections or comments the Minutes were approved as submitted and clarified.

#### 3. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak to General Comments.

#### 4. Public Hearing (00:03)

- a) **Site Development Permit Application for Front Street Townhomes, Quasi-Judicial (A)**  
*Presented by:*  
*Emily Medina, Associate Planner*

CHAIR SANFORD stated the Public Hearing purpose and order.

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Medina conducted Appearance of Fairness Disclosure questions with the Commissioners. COMMISSIONER PRICE stated having served on a Board with the Project Architect approximately eight to nine years ago, but that there is no personal relationship beyond the contact and stated being able to hear the matter fairly and impartially. No public present or online asked to challenge a Commissioner.

CHAIR SANFORD opened the Public Hearing and swore Medina in.

### *Staff Presentation*

Medina gave the Staff Presentation for the project.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification regarding redundancy in architecture. Medina replied that Olde Town standards are applied to the entire site including the residential portion. The repetitive nature does meet the standards for modulation, materials, and colors. The challenge of the site is the Cultural Business District (CBD) zone, so commercial standards of Olde Town are being applied to the site although a largely residential development. Staff opinion is that all standards as written have been met, but there is tension regarding residential with a commercially oriented design.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification regarding tree retention. Medina replied that staff believes that tree retention requirements have been met. A construction permit will require a Tree Plan and Arborist report. Meeting Olde Town canopy coverage will still be required.

COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if the SEPA includes groundwater testing for hydrocarbons or Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). Medina replied that a phase one environmental analysis was conducted although not required by SEPA. Stormwater is preliminary and will be finalized at construction permitting. There are no large environmental issues onsite that will require mitigation measures. COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked for clarification that phase one did not find anything that would trigger phase two testing and Medina replied not being aware.

COMMISSIONER PRICE asked that the material board be passed to Commissioners and asked for clarification regarding number 17 on the elevation page. Medina replied painted cement board in charcoal color.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN asked for clarification regarding proposed belt coursing. Medina replied that the applicant could follow up but believing that belt coursing refers to the brick surrounding the retail portion.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN asked if the Arborist was available at the Hearing regarding trees selected and growth, and Medina replied no. There is a city preferred tree list by the city Arborist that all trees are required to be selected from, but some current trees on the list will be changing. The construction permit will ensure that the preferred tree list is adhered to.

COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked, in regard to trees lost in the recent windstorm, if similar trees will replace fallen trees in a similar location, or if younger trees with more canopy cover in the future will be used. Medina replied younger trees with size requirements, planted where

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trees are planned to be retained. Trees selected will need to meet canopy coverage requirements. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked if coverage could be more in the future than prior to wind damage. Medina replied correct, likely, more trees are being planted than were previously onsite.

COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked what retail spaces are anticipated and about parking spaces available. Medina replied that the commercial tenant has not been selected so parking has been evaluated to meet retail and restaurant parking requirements. Whatever business comes to the space will need to apply for a tenant improvement building permit and if there are not enough spaces, the issue will need to be addressed at that time. There are limited uses on Front Street so there is confidence that requirements will be met.

CHAIR SANFORD stated that, regarding IMC 18.700.075 B1, pilasters are not referred to in code, and Medina replied correct, pilasters are not on the list. CHAIR SANFORD asked if flowerpots will be added although not shown on the elevation. Medina replied that pots are not shown but selected, and the pots will be present at construction permitting. CHAIR SANFORD asked for clarification that ornamental brackets are being added for lighting, condition 10, and Medina replied yes, as well as belt coursing and pots. CHAIR SANFORD stated that four are required, and Medina confirmed that one more condition will be added.

CHAIR SANFORD asked, regarding circulation through the project, if signage on Holly Street will be changed, currently no left turn, page 16 of the staff report, section seven. Medina replied that the Engineer would need to be consulted. CHAIR SANFORD asked for clarification regarding the route from the project to I-90. Medina replied that the traffic study has evaluated intersections, but the Community Planning and Development (CPD) and Public Works Engineers would be consulted to ensure traffic has been considered.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN asked for clarification regarding pilasters and plinths on Architect Plan requirements. Medina replied that there may have been a terminology switch by the applicant which was transposed into the staff report. CHAIR SANFORD stated not seeing plinths in the drawing but would ask the applicant following the next presentation. Medina replied that a condition could be added.

COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if there have been discussions regarding haul routes for demolition of the bank building particularly at high peak times. Medina replied that routes will be discussed at construction permitting but not at this time.

COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked for the rationale for the selection of non-native landscape species, page 55. Medina replied that the requirement is for 30% native species only. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN clarified the question, what is the rationale for allowing non-native species to be planted. Medina replied not having been present during writing of code, but stated that the reason could be probability, cost, and amount of selection.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated that some locations may be misidentified in the planting legend and schedule list, and Medina replied that the locations would be checked.

*Applicant Presentation*

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CHAIR SANFORD swore Kevin Merriman *with* Main Street Property Group in, and the Applicant Presentation was given.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification regarding what the buffer or separation between properties will look like at the south property line. Merriman replied that there is an existing wall and fence, ground cover, and trees planted between the pedestrian path and houses for less visibility. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked what the grade difference is between properties. Merriman replied that the grade changes approximately two feet from east to west. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification that there is a strong visual separation and Merriman replied yes. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked where loading and unloading will be on the property. Merriman replied that there is an area highlighted in yellow provided for deliveries within code. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked where residents have space to move furniture in and out, and Merriman replied that the 20' drive aisle will temporarily have a truck parked next to a unit garage.

COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked for clarification regarding the term *salmon-friendly* in promotional material. Merriman replied that a salmon-safe certification is the level of cleanliness that stormwater and runoff is from a site. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked if the building in question is salmon-safe, and Merriman replied that the certification is for commercial buildings but that the project will comply with all codes and standards.

COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked for a photo of the fence, but Merriman stated not having and described the fence as chain link with slats. COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked for clarification that sufficient vegetation is expected and how long growth will take as there are benches facing the fence in a communal space. Merriman replied that certain sized trees will be planted within and exceeding city standards.

CHAIR SANFORD asked if there will be visual variation in the façade facing Holly Street, page 10 of 23 in the plan set. Merriman replied that there are three colors to work with. CHAIR SANFORD stated that interior facing portions have coloring variation per unit and asked if possible on the Holly Street façade, and that the subject would be brought into deliberations later in the meeting. CHAIR SANFORD stated that for Front Street retail, code refers to providing visual interest and engagement of the community in a way that is consistent and inviting and asked if there are any ideas to add color or variation there. The subject would be brought into deliberations also. CHAIR SANFORD asked for clarification that there are three parking spaces, two at retail and one at the west end of building B. Medina replied that ADA required spaces is a building code standard that will be addressed with the building permit.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN suggested tie backs to canopies on the east façade to provide Olde Town flavor inexpensively.

#### *Public Comment*

There were no requests to speak.

#### *Rebuttal by Applicant, Staff*

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There were no rebuttals.

CHAIR SANFORD closed the Public Hearing.

*Commission Deliberation*

COMMISSIONER PRICE asked if the commercial aspect of the project meets the intent of Olde Town standards on the façade, to preserve and enhance.

COMMISSIONER GILBERT stated that the front façade appears disjointed from the side façade stylistically, noticeable while driving past on the street. CHAIR SANFORD stated agreement but that code is different for front facing commercial buildings than residential. COMMISSIONER GILBERT stated that there is residential facing the front as well. CHAIR SANFORD stated that a different canopy color could be helpful, and that signage and ornamental lighting will most likely be hung.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER PRICE but that the overall design is strong and code has been satisfied.

COMMISSIONER IKEDA stated that Front Street eclectic architecture and industrial areas are difficult to join together.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated that a possible condition would be to instruct the applicant to work with staff on potential changes to the Front Street façade.

COMMISSIONER PRICE stated agreement that staff can be worked with to feel like one building and still meet the intent of the Olde Town standard, more cohesive from commercial to residential.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated that the two different facades are not necessarily a problem.

*Commission Action*

MOTION by COMMISSIONER PRICE to approve the Site Development Permit for the Front Street Townhomes, SDP24-00002, as described and evaluated in the staff report dated December 31, 2024 with exhibits A through O subject to the conditions therein and as amended tonight, and move to direct the Community Planning and Development department to prepare findings of fact and conclusions for review approval. MOTION seconded by COMMISSIONER BRENNAN.

MOTION by COMMISSIONER MORGAN to add condition 11, the applicant shall work with staff on the design of the east façade of the building, taking measures to soften and become more coherent with Olde Town standards. MOTION seconded by COMMISSIONER PRICE.

COMMISSIONER FASEHUN stated that more detail may need to be added to the Motion. Medina replied that the condition as is would be difficult to implement, that more guidance is needed to be sure the desire of the Commission is accomplished. COMMISSIONER PRICE

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stated that the building should be more cohesive, enhancing and preserving the traditional Downtown core. Leeson stated that while only three paint colors can be used, materials and stains to not count towards the colors, and suggested verbiage, *work with the architect to include more stain or wood in the facades for consistency*. CHAIR SANFORD asked if accent colors are allowed beyond the three colors and Leeson replied no, not anymore. COMMISSIONER PRICE suggested verbiage, *consider consistency in the façade treatment for both retail bases as they wrap the corner, consider using brick in entirety, eliminate hardy panel, and or introduce fine grain materials*. CHAIR SANFORD asked if the request should be the fourth required element and asked COMMISSIONER MORGAN if the intent of the condition would still be accomplished, *a fourth required element will be added to the primary commercial entrances from the list of elements in IMC 18.700.075 B1*. COMMISSIONER MORGAN stated that removing the geometric vertical and horizontal nature of the façade remains. Medina replied that the applicant will be required to employ four elements regardless to meet code and the missing element will be required at the building permit phase.

CHAIR SANFORD asked if there is a requirement that commercial roofs have extended parapets, 18.700.060, and Medina replied that staff interpretation was that the project is a predominantly residential use, pitched roofs with a minimum of 1:4 slope.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN asked for clarification regarding plinths and code, plinths possibly to be identified as the fourth element to break up the front. Medina replied that having a condition specifying location would be helpful to staff.

COMMISSIONER PRICE asked CHAIR SANFORD if cornice treatments were being addressed in lower elements, and CHAIR SANFORD replied no, looking for another element to add to engage Front Street.

CHAIR SANFORD asked COMMISSIONER MORGAN to restate the condition to incorporate specifically. COMMISSIONER MORGAN restated condition 12, that the fourth required element for the east façade shall be plinths acceptable to staff located at three locations on the far left and the two columns surrounding the entry.

COMMISSIONER PRICE stated that in addition to the east façade treatments, the need to wrap the east to north corner also should be mentioned.

COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked if the reason for no windows on the residential elevation is for a firewall. Medina replied that there is not a requirement for windows and not being aware of why there are no windows.

Medina asked to confirm the condition verbiage to incorporate into the staff report and displayed what was transcribed. COMMISSIONER MORGAN asked to change the number of locations to five, to include the southern building. Medina asked for clarification that the condition applies to both north and south buildings, and COMMISSIONER MORGAN replied correct, a total of five locations. either side of each entry and the southeast corner of building B.

CHAIR SANFORD asked for a vote on condition 12. The condition passed unanimously.

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COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated that the south property line buffer does not provide enough landscaping considering the nature of the space, and additional language could be added. MOTION by COMMISSIONER BRENNAN for an amendment 13, to work with city staff to strengthen the landscaping buffer along the south property line including a visual separation [inaudible]. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked for clarification that the condition is to plant evergreen or similar adjacent to the fence, and COMMISSIONER BRENNAN replied that ground level plantings, six trees, and the fence are the extent of landscaping and taller, screening plantings are desired. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN stated that details should be clarified. Medina stated that trees must be planted a certain distance apart to ensure healthy roots and that screening the fence should include specific language regarding height and type. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN replied that landscaping maturity should be equal or higher than [inaudible] the idea being to screen the fence. Medina asked if all trees were desired or if a non-invasive vine could meet intent, and what percentage of fence should be seen. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN suggested that the majority of screening be provided, more than 50%. COMMISSIONER FASEHUN asked if more aesthetic fencing would be acceptable and COMMISSIONER BRENNAN replied no, a comfortable environment to encourage sitting [inaudible]. Medina replied that a new parking lot would require type two visual screening but the fence screens an existing parking lot. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated that the suggestion is to add higher planting materials that will provide some additional screening and interest. Medina suggested that type two visual screening be conditioned, applied as code. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated being okay with type two visual screening. MOTION seconded by COMMISSIONER MORGAN. The MOTION passed unanimously.

MOTION by CHAIR SANFORD for a condition 14, staff will work with transportation department to confirm that exiting the project onto Holly Street will preserve Level of Service D at the intersection of Rainier Boulevard, Juniper Street, and Gilman Boulevard. MOTION seconded by COMMISSIONER MORGAN. CHAIR SANFORD stated that the concern addresses that turning left out of Holly Street onto Front Street North is prohibited, and traffic heading toward I-90 will use Rainier Boulevard, Juniper Street, and Gilman Boulevard with a challenging intersection; the inability to turn left onto Holly Street was not addressed in the current staff report. Leeson replied that the site has 27 proposed units which should not affect Level of Service at the intersection, but staff would confirm with Public Works. Medina stated that a condition is unnecessary as CPD and Public Works engineering will be worked with to confirm a code requirement and not proposing something different on the project. CHAIR SANFORD withdrew the MOTION.

CHAIR SANFORD asked for a vote on the main MOTION. The MOTION passed unanimously. A Notice of Decision will be issued by staff within seven days.

## 5. Reports

- a) **City Council Update (01:47)**  
Presented by:  
*Christen Leeson, Principal Planner*

Leeson stated being the new Development Commission Liaison, a Principal Planner with CP&D and with the city since 2001 primarily in Long Range Planning.

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The Light Rail Study Plan was presented to the Committee of the Whole Council and alternatives for a Light Rail Station are being explored.

Councilmember Hunt has been elected to State Congress and several public meetings will occur to appoint a new councilmember.

Leeson thanked Commissioners Gilbert and Ikeda for attending the Middle-Housing walking tour. COMMISSIONER GILBERT stated appreciating the diverse examples, but accessibility in regard to mobility appeared to be lacking, and more variety for age-in-place citizens is needed. COMMISSIONER IKEDA stated that most duplexes do not appear out of place in the surroundings.

**6. Other Business/Announcements**  
a) **Upcoming Schedule**

**7. Adjournment**

CHAIR SANFORD adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC  
Recording Secretary