

Planning Policy Commission
9-14-17

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

September 14, 2017

City Hall South
Council Chambers

135 E. Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA 98027

PPC MEMBERS PRESENT

Joan Probala, Chair
Ron Faul, Vice Chair
Carl Swedberg
Lindsey Walsh
Vicky Hunt, Alt
Althea Saldanha, Alt.

STAFF/OTHERS PRESENT

Trish Heinonen, Long-Range Planning Manager
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager
Keith Niven, Director, Development Services

CALL TO ORDER

PROBALA, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY FAUL, SECONDED BY WALSH, that minutes of the PPC meeting on August 24 and August 31, 2017 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION: VERTICAL MIXED USE IN CENTRAL ISSAQUAH

Davis Hayes introduced the topic with a presentation.

PROBALA asked how the City gets people to want to come here. Davis Hayes replied that work is being done to explore the “Branding” of Issaquah. SWEDBERG asked about the concept of 90% structured parking, as that seems to be impossible to provide. Does this mean no on-street or surface parking? Davis Hayes replied that the 90% requirement includes on-street parking and a little surface parking, however getting more density and efficient use of land in the Urban Core requires more structured parking.

SALDANHA asked why staff doesn’t agree with consultant’s recommendations on ground floor uses. Davis Hayes replied that staff felt the consultant’s recommendations were too limiting for ground floor uses, for example, not allowing a drug store that could provide everyday services for the residents would not have been permitted.

FAUL asked if there is still on-street parking and bike and pedestrian focus with vertical mixed use. Davis Hayes replied yes, there are no changes to the on-street parking regulations or the bike and pedestrian focus.

Davis Hayes asked what information would PPC want at the September 28th meeting. PROBALA asked for pictures of local examples of vertical mixed use and what regulations were in place in those areas – for example, is structured parking always required? WALSH asked if Multifamily Tax Exemption is part of this discussion. Davis Hayes replied, no, that is part of the Transit Oriented Development discussion, coming to PPC at a later date. SALDANHA asked for a comparison of the consultant’s recommendations and how staff’s recommendation is different. HUNT asked if there are also incentives, not just regulations, that

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could help achieve vertical mixed use. WALSH asked if the 90% requirement of structured parking would be a disincentive.

Vertical Mixed Use Land Use Code Amendments for Central Issaquah will have a public hearing at PPC's September 28, 2017 meeting.

Public Comments:

Steve Pereira, 170 NE Dogwood, Issaquah, offered comments on Vertical Mixed Use, including the following. He would not want this in Olde Town. He wonders how many families and kids would live in this kind of development. Does this change the traffic pattern? Height measurement should include items, like vents, on the roof of the building.

Connie Marsh, Issaquah, offered comments, including the following. The map is confusing with the green and yellow lines, and Target on outside of the parcel. 125 foot maximum height was hard fought in the Central Issaquah review process, so why would community want 135 feet now? Big parcels by single land owners are barriers to change – they should be able to phase development – smaller areas of redevelopment is preferable than a big block of redevelopment. Critical areas need more ground proofing in the pictures being shown – where is the 100 ft buffer for the wetlands? How do all the puzzle pieces for the moratorium actions fit together?

Steve Crawford, Sammamish resident, offered comments, including the following. He doesn't like on-street parking – it should only be used for retail.

2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

Leeson introduced the topic with a presentation.

Commission members asked questions about the proposed land use designation for the King County Island Annexation Area. Niven explained the annexation and pre-annexation zoning process occurring at the Council level, the Transit Oriented Development Proposal and the PPC role of recommending a Land Use Designation for this area.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PROBALA opened the public hearing for public comment at 8:20 PM.

Bob Swanson, Issaquah Highlands resident, stated that he is not in favor of a school at the top of the hill by Swedish hospital as the roads are too narrow to handle school traffic and hospital traffic. This site is better suited for a park. He offered that a site on 9th and High Street would be better for a school as it is centrally located for more families.

Connie Marsh, Issaquah, asked what the next steps for the property purchased for a fire station? She also is not in favor of assigning several land use designations on a parcel that has not yet been split into separate parcels.

Steve Pereira, 170 NE Dogwood, Issaquah stated that perhaps the City needs a school zone. He also stated that the code should not allow any buildings on a slope.

Steve Crawford, Issaquah School District, stated that he is in favor of Community Facilities designation for the top of the hill adjacent to Issaquah Highlands.

Lisa Callan, Issaquah School Board, stated that the Issaquah School Board passed a resolution

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in favor of the top of the hill adjacent to Issaquah Highlands as a potential elementary school site. They are in favor of a Community Facilities designation for this property.

Hearing no additional requests to speak, PROBALA closed the public comment period at 8:36 PM.

Commission Discussion

The commission asked questions about how the City owned parcels would be separated. Niven stated that the City is currently doing a survey of the exact boundary of the previous King County shop site, as that site will be used for part of the Transit Oriented Development project's needed relocation of an existing local business so that the Transit Oriented Development, including affordable housing, related services and underbuilding parking, could occur next to the Transit Center on SR900.

MOVED BY FAUL, SECONDED BY SWEDBERG that all of the City owned land and WSDOT land be designated Community Facilities, and that the Burgess property be designated Commercial. MOTION CARRIED BY A 3 TO 2 VOTE (WALSH and PROBALA OPPOSED)

MOVED BY SWEDBURG, SECONDED BY WALSH that the Commission recommend to Council that the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER/ADJOURN

Heinonen said PPC's next meeting is September 28, and will be a public hearing on Vertical Mixed Use amendments to Central Issaquah Standards and a public hearing on the end of Development Agreements that the Commission has been working with the City's Urban Village Development Commission at several recent meetings.

With no additional business to conduct, PROBALA adjourned the meeting at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Heinonen

(Note: Although there was a quorum of Regular Members present, Alternate Members provided the tie breaker vote during the Land Use Designation Motion.)