TO: Cassie Franklin, Mayor  
City Council

FROM: David Stalheim, Long Range Planning Manager

DATE: August 16, 2018

RE: Metro Everett, Norton-Grand Historic Overlay Response

The input received at the city council hearing regarding property outside of the historic overlay did not include any owners of the property where these changes would be affected. Reducing heights below what is allowed under current law, without public notice to those owners, is not advised.

The planning commission’s recommendation to review all historic overlays is appropriate. This would allow the city to do a focused study of the issues, notify affected property owners, and make recommendations back to city council. In the interim, some measures to address the concerns are offered on the following pages.

The issues raised are often not just about historic preservation, but about compatibility where commercial zones abut residential zones on the rear (alley) side of the property. As such, our recommendations in some areas are more global than just focusing in on historic overlays, but are to address compatibility with adjacent residential zones when abutting a commercial zone.

We are also attaching some cross sections showing the heights of what would be allowed along Rucker and Grand Avenues adjacent to the Norton-Grand Historic Overlay.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at dstalheim@everettwa.gov or call 425-257-8736.
General Policy Amendment:
Recommendation #1: Amend, and add to, the following action to the Metro Everett Plan:

**HR-7:** Review *historic overlays* within and adjacent to Metro Everett to add considerations for historic preservation, land use, and a strong review process to prevent the unnecessary demolition of historic buildings and structures with historic significance. The *Riverside Historic Overlay* properties that front along Everett Avenue to look at potential boundary changes.

Height Amendments:
Recommendation #2: The area along Rucker and Pacific where the Metro Everett plan increases the maximum height currently allowed from 75’ (7 floors) to 8 floors, is recommended to be reduced to the maximum height allowed under current law (7 floors).

*Note:* see map and cross sections at the end of this document which show the heights along Rucker to Grand in context with the natural topography of the area.
Memo to City Council, re: Norton-Grand Historic Overlay in Metro Everett  
August 16, 2018

Recommendation #3: In reviewing the calculation for how heights are measured in the Metro Everett and Core Residential Area development standards (Ordinance #3, Chapter 20), the text in the proposed ordinance allows fractions to be rounded down, allowing potentially taller buildings than anticipated in our review. The following amendment to address fractions is recommended.

20.410 How Building Heights are Measured

A. Metro Everett Zones (UR, UM and ULI)
   1) The height of buildings shall be measured in floors.
   2) Total Floor Calculation. For purposes of this section, the number of floors shall be calculated as follows:
      a) First floor: Fifteen (15) feet
      b) Upper floors: Ten (10) feet
      c) Any floor with a height less than the numbers shown above shall be considered a floor. For example, a building with a first floor height of twelve (12) feet and four (4) upper floors of nine (9) feet is considered five (5) floors.
      d) Any floor with a height greater than shown above is allowed but shall be calculated as a fraction of the floor limits. For example, a building with five (5) upper floors each measuring twelve (12) feet would count as six (6) floors (5 x 1.2 = 6) for determining maximum floor height limits.
      e) Fractions: Any fractions shall be rounded down to the next whole number, except that when this computation results in a fraction which equals 0.5 or larger, the number is rounded up to the next whole number. For example, a calculation of 6.48 floors is rounded down to six (6) floors, while a calculation of 6.5 floors is rounded up to seven (7) floors.

   3) Where to Measure Floor Heights. The height of buildings with floor measurements shall be measured from the average sidewalk elevation at the front lot line or, where no sidewalk exists, the average of the record profile grade elevation of the street abutting the principal frontage of the building, as determined by the Public Works Department.

Illustration 20 - 16: How Building Heights are Measured
Transition to Residential Zones Amendments:
The Norton-Grand Historic Overlay boundary is inconsistent in whether it includes any transition area adjacent to structures considered contributing to the historic significance of the area. For example, the blocks along the east side of Grand Avenue north of 32nd does not include historic structures but are within the historic overlay. On the other hand, almost all of the structures on the east side of Grand for the blocks south of 32nd include structures as being contributing to the historic significance of the area.

As the testimony at both the planning commission and council indicate, this issue of compatibility with the adjacent residential character is concerning to the property owners. This issue was addressed by reducing the maximum height to what is less than currently allowed in that area and adding a requirement for upper floor modulation. However, these measures may not be adequate to protect the character of the residential area, including historic homes that would abut new developments.

Until the review of historic overlays is completed pursuant to the previous policy recommendation, the following additions are recommended for Chapter 20.

Recommendation #4: Add a provision for increased setbacks of buildings that abut residential zones as follows:

20.300 Building Form Standards
C. Upper Floor Modulation Adjacent to Historic Overlays
Development of property within an Urban Mixed (UM) zone, which abuts a residential zone along the rear property line with height limits thirty-five feet (35') or less, may not exceed thirty-five feet (35') in height within thirty feet (30') from the rear property line. (See Illustration below.) This provision shall sunset on December 31, 2019. Development of property within a zone abutting an historic overlay is required to have an additional five-foot interior side or rear setback for each ten feet or fraction thereof by which the building exceeds thirty-five feet in height for only those portions of the building that exceed thirty-five feet in height.

Illustration 20 - 1: Upper Floor Modulation between UM and Residential Zones
Recommendation #5: Add a provision for additional design standards for development in the Urban Mixed (UM) zone abutting any residential zone:

20.340 Special Design Standards
The following site and design requirements apply to development that includes one or more of these design features, or where development in the UM zone abuts a residential zone along a rear property line.

E. Any new development exceeding fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet of gross floor area in an Urban Mixed (UM) zone which abuts a residential zone shall provide plans to demonstrate visual compatibility with the adjacent residential zone. This subsection shall sunset on December 31, 2019. Development subject to this requirement shall provide plans and demonstrate the following:

1) The rear side of the building visible from the adjacent residentially zoned property shall be given architectural treatment using two or more of the following:
   a) Visible rooflines;
   b) Windows;
   c) Secondary entrances;
   d) Balconies
   e) Use of brick and/or stone on at least ten percent of the building façade that faces the alley;
      or
   f) Awnings

2) Service areas and mechanical equipment shall be screened as follows:
   a) All mechanical equipment, loading and trash collection areas shall be screened by a combination of masonry walls and planting. Sound buffering should be used to reduce noise impacts.
   b) Mechanical units shall be located and constructed so the impact of noise from such equipment is directed away from residential structures and uses.
Current Conditions (across from 3124 Grand – Cross Section 1):

Development Meeting Historic Overlay Standards (across from 3124 Grand – Cross Section 1):
Cross Section 1 (at approximately 3126 Rucker to 3124 Grand):
Cross Section 2 (at approximately 3200 Rucker to 3206 Grand):
Cross Section 3 (at approximately 3222 Rucker to 3222 Grand):
Cross Section 4 (at approximately 3230 Rucker to 3228 Grand):