

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 4, 2022
APPROVED: kmd**



1. ROLL CALL

Chair Michael Finch called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Christine Lavra, Adam Yanasak, Michael Zelinski, Carly McGinn, Demi Chatters, Kevin Ballard, and Charles Adkins.

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Jennifer Gregerson, Alberto Vazquez, and Kathy Davis

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Commissioner Chatters made a motion to approve the July 19, 2022, meeting minutes.

Commissioner Ballard seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Adkins, yes; Commissioner Ballard, yes; Commissioner Chatters, yes; Commissioner McGinn, abstain; Commissioner Zelinski, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, abstain; Commissioner Lavra, yes; and Chair Finch; abstain.

Motion Carried.

3. REPORTS OF MEMBERS AND COMMITTEES

Commissioner Chatters mentioned that the Snohomish County Economic Alliance presented some good information on homelessness. It was an evidence-based discussion with the community. She highly recommended viewing that discussion on the Economic Alliance Facebook page or their YouTube channel.

4. STAFF COMMENTS

Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Planning Director, provided information on the two code amendments previously recommended by Planning Commission that were recently approved by City Council – Revising Regulations for Homeless Shelters and Housing, and Removing the Limit on Residents in a Dwelling. Mr. Stevens-Wajda distributed a list of revisions that changed Commission’s recommendation after City Council deliberations. The ordinances are effective on October 5, 2022. The accessory dwelling unit code amendments are on the Planning Commission agenda for October 18, 2022.

5. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

6.A. EVERETT HOUSING AUTHORITY PARK DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT

Ashley Lommers-Johnson, Everett Housing Authority (EHA) Executive Director, presented information on the Everett Housing Authority's strategic mission and the Baker Heights location and site history. Bob Bengford, Makers Architecture and Urban Design, presented information on the current site, the need for a planned development overlay, the housing needs assessment, and the 2021 Park District Master Plan. Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Everett Planning Director, presented information on the entitlements requirements and process which includes the development overlay and development agreement. Mr. Bengford continued the presentation and provided information on the project status and community outreach.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Zelinski asked what kind of flexibility the EHA had in providing housing for mixed income levels. Mr. Lommers-Johnson responded that the Federal Housing policy had moved away from concentrations of extreme poverty in those developments and had moved towards more mixed income developments to create diverse, healthy communities of opportunity where residents flourish.

Commissioner McGinn asked if there was information on the target percentage for owner-occupied housing. Mr. Lommers-Johnson responded not at this time. Commissioner Ballard asked about their housing mix vision for the site. Jason Morrow, Director of Development for EHA, responded that the intent was to replace the existing public housing with subsidized housing. Madrona Square currently under construction provided for 105 subsidized units with the remainder of those units proposed in the Parks District. The EHA supported more of a mixed income development that provided affordable subsidized housing, while at the same time being fully committed to decentralization of poverty in the Delta neighborhood. He added that they couldn't commit to specific data numbers until the project moves forward in phases over the ten-year period.

Commissioner McGinn asked about the percentages for Madrona Square. Mr. Morrow responded that project was separate from the proposed Parks District; however, sixty-seven of those units were targeted for children and families and homelessness within the Everett School District. The remainder of those units would fulfill basic requirements to house folks at 50 and 60% AMI for their tax credit investment structure. Commissioner McGinn asked if any of those units would be owner-occupied. Mr. Morrow responded no.

Commissioner Yanasak asked if there was any community opposition. Mr. Morrow responded that they had spent a year in consultation with the community and other civic stakeholders to get through the first stage of the master plan. A lot of the concerns tended to be around height and density; however, responses were generally favorable. There was a very positive response to the public amenities and benefits from all the surveys and community meetings.

Commissioner Yanasak asked if there were any similar projects in the region. Mr. Morrow responded regionally, there was a strong movement to build mixed income market type developments with retail

and civic amenities. He added that the Park District area can afford that need in the sense that the scale provides a bit more support for some retail and civic amenities.

Commissioner McGinn stated that this was a very necessary project; however, she would like to see the project in a massing study in three dimensions to view the site from the context of the neighborhood in future presentations. She appreciated the public amenities element and would like the development to become a very vibrant and beautiful asset to the neighborhood; however, she would like more information on the numbers and data.

Commissioner Chatters appreciated that the Everett Housing Authority was moving forward with plans to develop the Baker Heights site and appreciated that the plans included opportunities for commercial spaces and small businesses. She agreed with Commissioner McGinn regarding options for home ownership. Commissioner Chatters asked about the phase 2 timeline. Mr. Morrow responded that the timeline was conceptual and was done some time ago. The townhouse units would be phased in later. Commissioner Chatters asked about parking. Mr. Morrow responded that they had not studied parking to any degree of depth, and so they would bring that back to Planning Commission later.

Commissioner Adkins asked if there would be any attempt to commemorate the origins of the Baker Heights project on the site. Mr. Morrow responded they would consider that suggestion. Commissioner Adkins referred to the provided materials regarding the pursuit of partnerships with tribal groups as the development progresses and asked why not pursue those partnerships right now. Mr. Morrow responded that they had not fully engaged with partnerships especially on environmental and other kinds of regulatory compliance; however, they would do a better job of reaching out to those partnerships early.

Chair Finch asked about the 1500 units and scale of the project. Mr. Morrow responded that they made an assessment on the existing land use and then what would be possible in terms of a vibrant environment that provided a variety of uses that met the public's needs, the 1500 units was a conceptual maximum target in terms of a housing provision. The EHA didn't have another site large enough that met the community's housing and retail needs. Commissioner Finch commented that the forms of the buildings were unlike the size and design of the market rate residential buildings in the downtown. Mr. Morrow responded that their response had been to be very forward-looking, not only about this decade but also decades to come, and to try to respond to a massive need to provide affordable housing and housing in general now.

Commissioner Finch asked about the current zoning and the planned development overlay. Mr. Morrow responded that some of the retail and civic type uses would not be possible with the existing zoning. The current zoning would allow for a much broader housing envelope but would not allow for a lot of public civic features that address the community needs such as the civic, social, retail, and other amenities the community needs.

Chair Finch stated that when EHA comes back to Commission, it would be helpful for Commissioners to understand the specific benefits that the Public Development Overlay affords the Parks District that the current zoning doesn't. He added that it would be good for the Commission to hear about the opportunities for home ownership. Chair Finch understood the need for the community amenities such as the retail spaces; however, he had questions regarding the need and sustainability of 45,000 s.f. of commercial space.

Commissioner Yanasak asked if the EHA currently managed any non-residential properties. Mr. Morrow responded that they had non-residential properties but didn't manage any retail type uses.

Commissioner Yanasak stated that he would like more information on the role of the EHA.

Commissioner McGinn and Chair Finch agreed.

Commissioner Adkins stated that this kind of big innovative project was precisely what was needed to meet Everett's housing needs to get that 22,000 units. He appreciated that EHA was proposing the project and was thinking outside of the box to really create something that responded to the community needs.

Commissioner McGinn asked about bike and pedestrian connections to and from the site. Currently, there was a lack of general connectivity throughout the city especially in the Delta neighborhood. She asked how bike paths were being addressed in the vicinity, how sidewalks were being addressed, and asked if there were opportunities to create a few more threads to the rest of the city.

Mr. Stevens-Wajda stated that he attended a Delta neighborhood meeting and at that meeting there was a lot of concerns regarding basic civic amenities such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and streetlights. He stated that there were limited transportation funds for those improvements, so it would take some time to close the connection gaps throughout the City. He stated that the Planned Development Overlay and development agreement process was a vehicle for neighborhood uplift in terms of infrastructure and we would need to pay attention to knitting this project into the fabric of the community.

Commissioner Chatters stated that community connectivity leads to safer neighborhoods. She appreciated the project vision and appreciated that a community garden was included as part of the vision.

Citizen Comments

Ryan Webber, Chestnut Street, supported the project. He stated that there were no restaurant or café uses, and no informal gathering spaces in the Delta neighborhood. He appreciated that there was a micro business component such as live work units for small businesses within the development. He stated that the development would provide the community a chance to have some of that commercial space which would help with the vibrancy of the neighborhood. Sidewalk connections were also important to safely walk throughout their neighborhood.

6.B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE PROJECT STATUS

Mr. Stevens-Wajda presented information on the timeline for the five phases; Housing Action Plan implementation, Middle Housing, and periodic update grant work; outreach and public participation; growth alternatives; subareas; scoping report; and Commerce and PSRC guidance.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Adkins referred to the subarea map and asked why South Forest Park was in Area five rather than four. Jennifer Gregerson, Everett Special Projects Manager, responded that the boundaries were based on how the neighborhoods accessed more towards Evergreen than towards Mukilteo Blvd. Mr. Stevens-Wajda added that most of the neighborhoods in those areas had the connection to the arterial commercial district.

Commissioner Chatters asked about the census tract boundaries. Mr. Stevens-Wajda responded that the blue line follows the census tract boundaries except in the south end of the city.

Commissioner McGinn asked if there was any residential located in Area 1. Mr. Stevens-Wajda responded no, and that the area was all zoned heavy industrial.

Commissioner McGinn stated that several years ago she had heard some discussion about housing types being integrated into existing commercial fabric in untried ways. She was aware the shopping malls were faltering and asked if those areas could be redeveloped into residential uses to help address housing needs. Mr. Stevens-Wajda responded that zoning at the Everett Mall would currently allow for seven or eight floors of residential and the commercial uses.

ADJOURNED 8:27 PM



Planning Commission Secretary

10/19/22
Date



Administrative Coordinator

10-18-2022
Date

