



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Vancouver City Hall – Council Chambers – 415 W. Sixth Street
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www.cityofvancouver.us

Marjorie Ledell • Steve Schulte • Larry Blaufus • Zachary Pyle
Nena Cavel • Patrick Adigweme • Melissa von Borstel

July 25, 2023

REGULAR MEETING

Vancouver City Hall - 415 W. Sixth Street, Vancouver WA

CALL TO ORDER

The July 25, 2023, meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair Ledell.

ROLL CALL

Present: Marjorie Ledell, Zachary Pyle, Patrick Adigweme, Larry Blaufus, Nena Cavel, Steve Schulte, and Melissa von Borstel

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by Vice Chair Pyle, second by Commissioner Cavel, and carried unanimously to adopt the June 13, 2023, minutes.

WORKSHOP

2023 ANNUAL REVIEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING CODE MAP AND TEXT CHANGES

Bryan Snodgrass, Principal Planner, Community Development Department

Bryan Snodgrass presented three proposed site-specific Comprehensive Plan and Zone changes. The first is located at the intersection of SE 192nd and SE 15th Street, the second (called Wood Duck Springs) is located on NE 63rd Street, and the third (called Date Park) is located on E 18th Street. The presentation summarized proposed text changes, including one Comprehensive Plan text change in the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), and ten text changes in the zoning code, which is [Title 20](#) of the Vancouver Municipal Code.

Commission Questions and Discussion

- At what point in this process are traffic studies related to the zone changes reviewed, who reviews the studies, and what is the public engagement process during this review. Staff responded that at the rezone phase, Public Works staff review the number of trips generated under the existing and proposed zone and impacts on existing facilities. Public outreach occurs through neighborhood associations where they exist, as well as with Planning Commission workshops and the public hearing.
- The process for traffic study and public engagement after a development application is submitted. Staff responded once the site plan for a development is submitted, it is routed to the review team for concurrency and transportation review. That information is publicly available, and those who

live within 500 feet of the site are notified. At this stage of the process, the transportation development review staff may require mitigation if warranted.

- What are the height restrictions for the proposed rezone on 192nd Avenue? Staff responded for the R-30 zone, the height maximum is 50 feet.
- Going forward, further details were requested on the north end of the site of the Wood Duck Springs application.
- Proposed height for the new structure with the Date Park application.
- Contact for the Bennington Neighborhood Association.
- Tools for potential displacement at this stage of the application process.
- Regarding the text change to exempt applications for apartments with fewer than 200 units from the SEPA review process, is this in line with the State's requirements? Staff responded the State passed a law enabling, but not requiring, jurisdictions to make this change. Previously, applications for apartments with 20 or fewer units could be exempted from SEPA review unless SEPA was triggered by the presence of critical lands or other factors.
- Significance of the limit at 200 units. Staff responded the SEPA process began during a time when many jurisdictions had few or limited environmental regulations. Seldom do we receive comments or appeals during the SEPA review. Typically, when there are comments, it's in relation to critical lands, and this proposed change would still require a SEPA review if there are critical lands.

WAREHOUSE CODE CHANGES

Chad Eiken, Director; Becky Coutinho, Associate Planner, Community Development Department; Kara Hall, Fehr & Peers

Chad Eiken introduced the workshop and presented an overview of the project, the scope of the surge in large warehouse development applications submitted within the City, the goals of the warehouse study, and an analysis of available land for large warehouses. Becky Coutinho presented on the consideration of equity in proximity to industrial areas. Kara Hall presented the key takeaways from the study, including physical and operational differences in traditional and e-commerce warehouses, impacts to traffic, differences in economic impact and employment, consideration for adaptive re-use of large warehouses, and measures to align with the Climate Action Plan. Becky Coutinho presented potential code amendments to address use limitations, locational concerns, traffic impacts, parking and loading, loading bays, lot coverage, visual impacts, energy consumption, and recycling of packaging. Outreach is ongoing with environmental groups, local industry partners, and neighborhood associations.

Commission Questions and Discussion

- Residential and industrial zones coexisting next to one another. Staff responded there are ways to mitigate for impacts from the industrial zone and warehouses on residential areas.
- Would the proposed code amendments bring the City in line with other jurisdictions in this area? Staff are not aware of any other Cities that have taken on this type of code amendment. There is one example of a City or County in California that banned warehouses in a specific corridor.
- Adaptive re-use of warehouse sites. Staff responded warehouses are expensive to build, and the intent is to build them with the option of adapting the use later if needed. The buildings can also be built to be later subdivided to smaller spaces.

- Darker exterior colors of the buildings and energy efficiency. Staff responded the intent is to not use dark or bright white colors on the exterior to maximize energy efficiency and reduce visual impacts.
- With the update to the Comprehensive Plan in the next two years, will these changes apply to all industrial districts where warehouses are allowed, and could industrial lands move to accommodate more warehouses?
- Traffic mitigation strategies for 24 hour warehouses. Staff responded certain warehouses and businesses send trucks out during non-peak hours.
- Provide the employment and economic impact information per 100,000 square feet to assess impacts more consistently.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Don Steinke was present to provide comments on the warehouse code changes. He provided a list of suggestions for the proposed code changes related to solar readiness and batteries, use of heat pumps, fleet compliance with Clean Fleet rules in California, transit and bike friendly facilities, restrictions on idling, and greater financial assurances if there is a fueling station present.

Cathryn Chudy was present to provide comments on the warehouse code changes. She supported strengthening the requirements of the code amendments, especially those related to the Climate Action Policy, including requiring the rooftops be solar ready. The impacts of these facilities should be balanced with mitigation measures in the permitting and approval process to ensure the community is protected and it aligns with climate and equity policies.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

HEIGHTS MIXED USE (HX) ZONE

Amy Zoltie, Real Estate Project Manager, Economic Prosperity & Housing

Amy Zoltie presented a brief project history and timeline and a summary of the code amendments previously reviewed and approved by the Commission. The additional proposed code changes to the HX zone are intended to slightly increase maximum building height limit in the District Gateway sub-district when not abutting single family zoned parcels, divide the definition of commercial frontage into two types, and modify the ground-floor uses diagram to reflect changes to allowed ground floor uses in certain locations.

Commission Questions and Discussion

- Examples of uses included in Commercial Type 2. Staff responded some examples could be retail, personal services, or dining. The intent of the code is to activate the areas around public spaces.
- Challenges to development of the area. Staff responded that a significant upfront investment infrastructure is needed to facilitate development. In addition, while the City has control of the parcels it owns, it does not control the development schedule for privately owned parcels.

BURNT BRIDGE CREEK WEST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING MAP CHANGE

Bryan Snodgrass, Principal Planner, Community Development Department

Bryan Snodgrass presented an overview of the proposed zone change, approval criteria for this rezone request, as well as information related to the critical lands on the property and the criteria for critical areas

review. Amaia Smith, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), presented information on Oregon white oaks, the woodland conditions on the site, and the types of mitigation that may be required. Keith Jones, Senior Planner, presented on the City process for reviewing development applications, the additional requirements under the critical areas ordinance, and the sequencing of mitigation activities. Peter Condyles, representing the applicant, indicated the provided site plan is an example of a potential building on the site but is not intended to be final. The applicant is working with the City and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to comply with the critical areas ordinance.

Commission Discussion

- Confirmation that the submitted site plan is an example of what could be built. The applicant confirmed it was an example of the highest use of the site based on economic feasibility and in compliance with City code.
- Is the proposed zone less impactful to the site than the existing zone? The applicant responded the OCI zone allows 100% use of the site, and IL allows 75% maximum use. The maximum building height is also lower under IL than the OCI zone. Staff confirmed this assessment but noted the critical area ordinance supersedes what is allowed within the zone.
- The allowed lot usage in the OCI zone with consideration of the portion that is protected under the critical area ordinance. Staff responded the maximum lot coverage under OCI is 75%. The critical areas ordinance and analysis will indicate the portion of the land that is developable with specific mitigation measures.
- Mitigation measures for canopy loss. Staff responded the City ordinance requires maintaining no net loss of habitat function and value. The WDFW provides guidance to interpret the meaning of no net loss of habitat function and value. The site would be reviewed for the baseline function of the oaks and mitigation for physical loss of habitat removed as well as offsets to address the temporal lag that will occur while seedlings grow to a size that regains the level of functional value the current trees provide to the landscape.

ADJOURNMENT 7:33 P.M.

Marjorie Ledell, Chair

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